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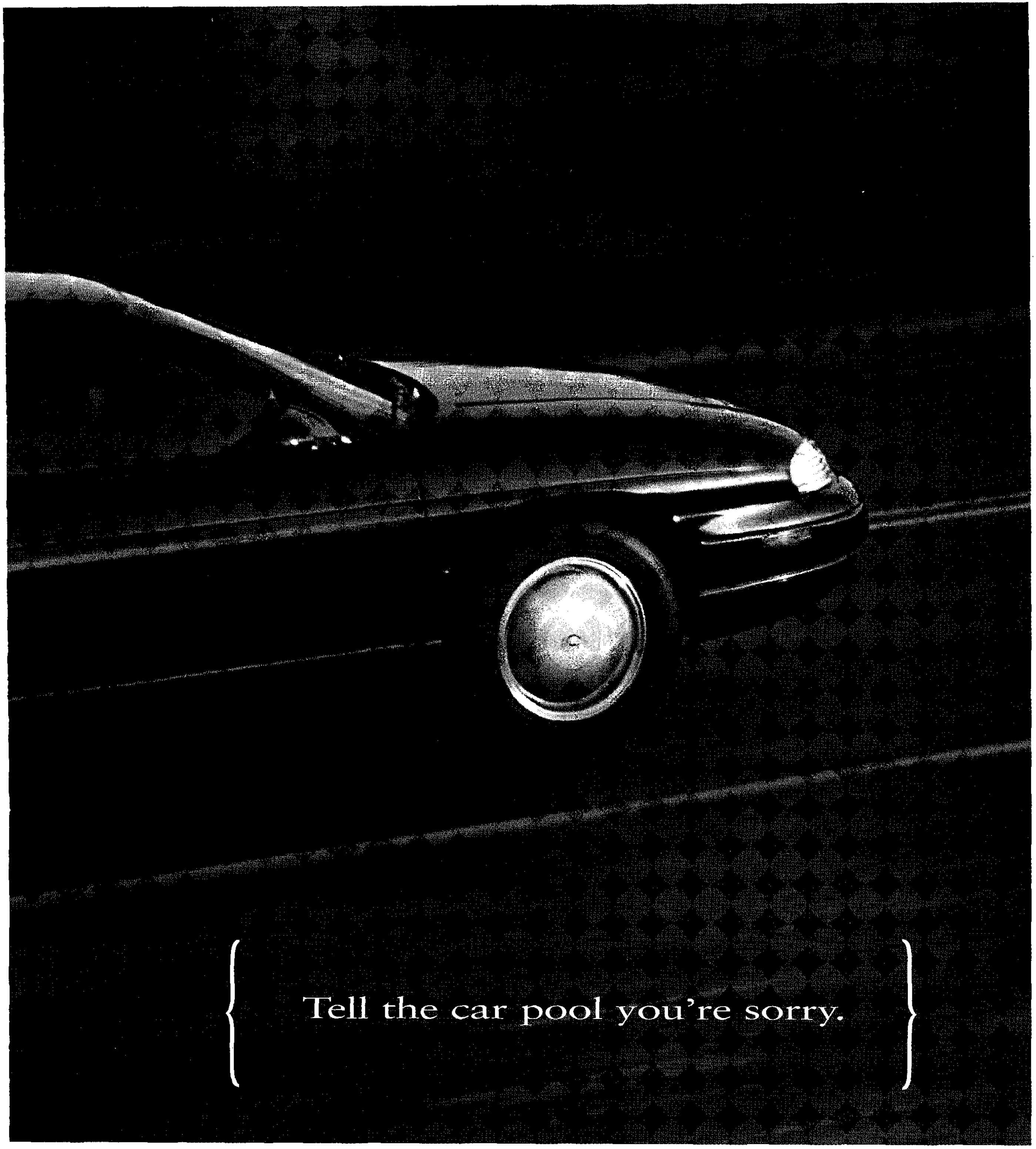

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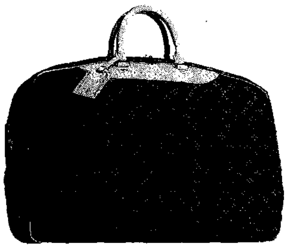

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THE NEW YORKER

SEPTEMBER 12, 1994

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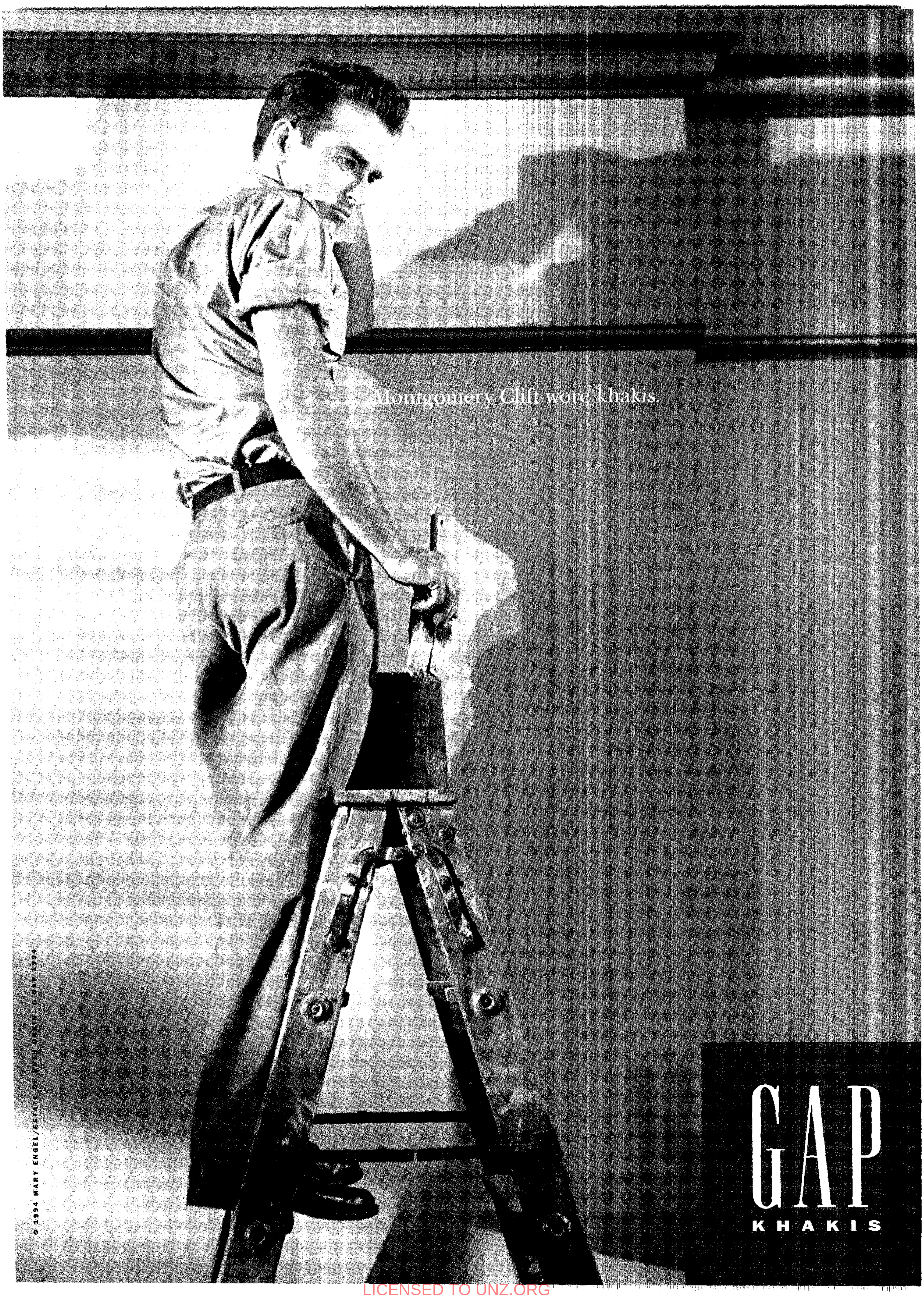
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COMMENT

A MANAGEABLE CROWD

The real news about global population: consensus and success.

NEWS reports on the preparations for this week's International Conference on Population and Development, in Cairo, have been devoted almost exclusively to polemics from the Vatican and a few Islamic countries about abortion and sexual mores. That's too bad, because the real significance of the conference is greater, and more encouraging, than those noisy controversies suggest. The event marks a transformation of genuine historical importance—and one that has gone mostly unnoticed in the United States and Europe.

For decades, the "population explosion" ranked with the Bomb as a terrifying and seemingly permanent feature of modern history. But, just as the unexpected end of the Cold War radically diminished the threat of global nuclear war, so the astonishing success of the family-planning movement has defused the exponential increases in global population. This is old news in the developing world, but, like the proverbial soldier emerging from the jungle long after the war has ended, most of us in the United States are thoroughly out of date on population issues. We still tend to imagine the world as it was in the early nineteen-seventies, when birth rates were sky-high, the First and Third Worlds were engaged in a bitter ideological debate over "population control" versus aid to economic development, and, given the disappointing results of the early family-planning programs in South Asia, most experts had acceded to the view that population growth would slow only with the kind of economic development that had taken place in the West in the course of a century. What we overlooked was the contraceptive revolution.

Ask your friends what they believe to be the proportion of couples in the developing world who use contraception to control their fertility, and you can lay a safe bet that the answers will miss by a mile. For the figure is fifty-five per cent—much closer to the seventy-five-per-cent contraceptive prevalence in the industrialized world than to the under-nine-per-cent prevalence that existed in the developing world when the international family-planning movement got under

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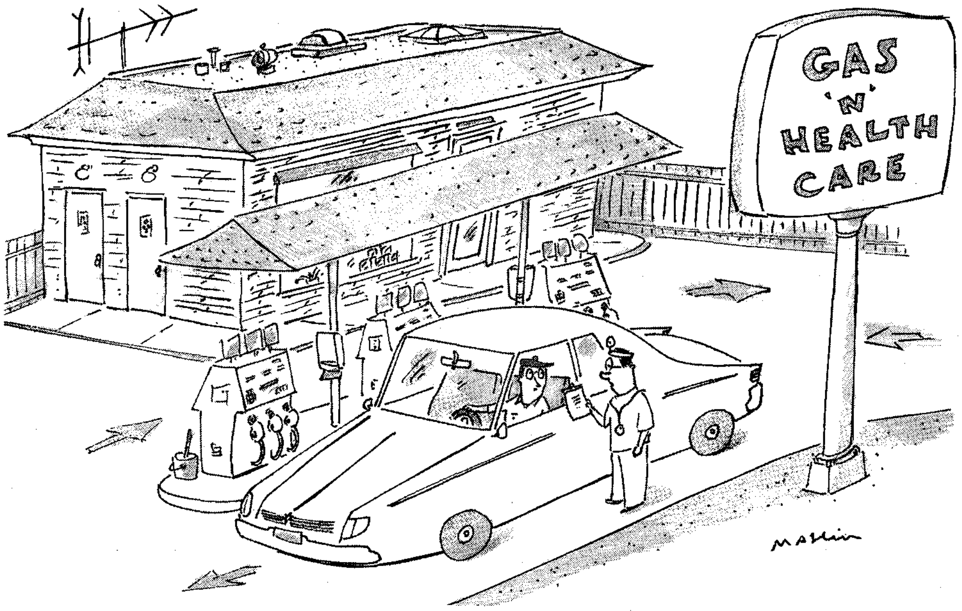

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• •

way, in the mid-sixties. At that time, women in the developing world averaged 6.1 children apiece; by 1990 they were averaging 3.8, and the total fertility rate is continuing to fall. This dramatic decline results largely from the voluntary use of public and private family-planning services, not from coercive measures, and it has required very low investments. Today, the world spends only six billion dollars a year on population programs, with a billion dollars coming from international donors and the rest from the developing countries themselves.

Although all developing countries now have family-planning programs, the success of the programs has varied considerably. Not surprisingly, the sharpest fertility declines have occurred in rapidly industrializing countries, such as South Korea and Taiwan, and minimal progress has been made in poor and politically unstable countries, including many in sub-Saharan Africa. All the same, high-quality family-planning programs have achieved remarkable results in some of the world's poorest countries. In Bangladesh, where a well-designed program was put in place twenty years ago, the fertility rate has fallen from about seven children per woman to 4.2. Similarly, Kenya's total fertility rate has fallen since 1978 from 8.1 children per woman—one of the highest rates ever recorded—to 5.4. As these examples suggest, religion and custom have not proved to be insuperable barriers to fertility decline. Family planning is working in most Muslim countries outside the Persian Gulf, and, the Vatican's objections notwithstanding, it has had great success in most Catholic countries. In Latin America as a whole, contraceptive prevalence is now around sixty per cent, and women are averaging 3.5 children, as opposed to six before the programs began.

In the nineteen-nineties, ideological wrangling about the relationship of population growth to economic development has subsided. The United States long ago quit insisting on top-down population-control programs with numerical goals, and most developing countries have come to see that population pressures are an impediment to sustainable progress. A parallel debate between environmentalists and women's groups—in which the former were advocating strict population controls of a kind that the latter saw as insensitive and potentially coercive—has died down, too, thanks in part to a series of international research surveys on family planning, which laid the groundwork for a consensus approach. Research has shown that well-designed voluntary programs are just as effective in reducing fertility as the kind of coercive measures used in China. In other words, women in developing countries, like their sisters in the industrialized world, want to control their own reproductive lives, and, if they are given access to adequate services, will do so in numbers surprising to demographers. The surveys also showed that women are more likely to use family-planning programs if they include health-care services for mothers and infants, and that the most reliable determinant of declining fertility is women's education.

In Cairo, delegates from almost a hundred and eighty countries will debate many issues, but, having been charged with developing a twenty-year plan to stabilize the world's population, they have already come to broad agreement on a draft calling for support of women's rights, women's education, and children's health. The arguments over abortion and teen pregnancies—so mesmerizing in this country—are insignificant beside the main issue, which is finding resources to cope with the population challenge ahead. Though population-growth rates have been falling, the world population is continuing to grow, and the largest cohort of females in history is now of child-bearing age. The world population is approaching six billion, up from two and a half billion in 1950. The United Nations Population Fund estimates that it will be somewhere between seven billion eight hundred million and twelve and a half billion in the year 2050. The lower figure can probably be achieved if family-planning programs are expanded to meet the needs of the many millions of women who still have no access to contraception and infant health care. The cost of such an effort will not be enormous. The U.N. Population Fund is seeking to obtain seventeen billion dollars to finance population programs by the year 2000, with five and a half billion dollars coming from the industrialized countries—roughly the cost of the aborted Shoreham nuclear power plant.

President Clinton has requested five hundred and eighty-five million dollars for population activities in 1995—a significant increase over past funding levels—and, in a significant gesture of solidarity, both houses of Congress have not only approved it but added a bonus of ten million. This will make the United States the single largest donor. It will also bolster the American position in Cairo, by demonstrating an American commitment to women, healthy children, and the future of the planet. —FRANCES FITZGERALD

These nine uncommonly talented designers now have something in common.

Muriel R. Cooper

The late Muriel Cooper cofounded MIT's Visible Language Workshop. She and her students developed dynamic three-dimensional visual modes to present complex data within the two dimensions of the computer screen.

Zuzana Licko and Rudy VanderLans

Zuzana Licko and Rudy VanderLans' work has had a crucial impact on digital typography. Their new concepts in graphic design have, through work in their seminal magazine *Emigré*, had a dramatic influence on our visual environment.

Katherine and Michael McCoy

During the 1980s, the McCoys, co-chairs of the Design Department of the Cranbrook Academy of Art, joined the ranks of the nation's most influential designers through their work on symbolism and semantics of design.

Achva Stein

Landscape architect Achva Stein sees her field as paramount to the very future of the planet whether it be the possibilities for urban agriculture, community gardens, the reclamation of ravaged landscapes or national parks development.

John and Nancy Jack Todd

A biologist and writer respectively, John and Nancy Jack Todd and their company, Ocean Arks Intl., have built a series of Living Machines, household- and community-scale sewage treatment and wastewater purification systems in several North American locales.

Lebbeus Woods

Lebbeus Woods is an architectural visionary who, through a stream of books and exhibitions, has delineated a series of compelling images of the future of architecture and urbanism. Woods is tenacious in his insistence that architecture aspire to poetry, to science, to philosophy.

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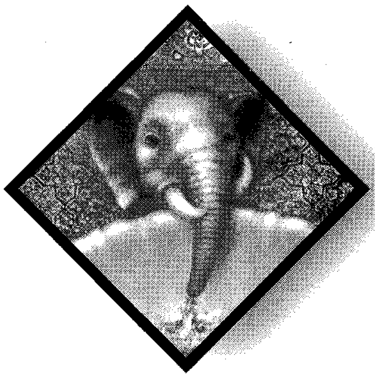

JOHN IRVING

A SON OF THE CIRCUS

Born a Parsi in Bombay, sent to university and medical school in Vienna, Dr. Farrokh Daruwalla is a 59-year-old orthopedic surgeon and a Canadian citizen who lives in Toronto. Periodically, the doctor returns to Bombay, where most of his patients are crippled children.

Once, 20 years ago, Dr. Daruwalla was the examining physician of two murder victims in Goa. Now, 20 years later, he will be reacquainted with the murderer.

RANDOM HOUSE

IN THE MAIL

FANNING THE FLAMES?

Jeffrey Toobin's article "Annals of Law: An Incendiary Defense" (July 25th) only intensifies what must be a growing conviction that at least the intent of justice in this country is being rapidly derailed. The practice of selling evidence to the press—to both the so-called respectable media and the tabloids—is only one side of an increasingly ugly picture, and one that can probably be handled by well-conceived laws. But the willingness of attorneys to risk igniting an entire community with easily aroused hatreds—a risk that the Simpson defense team seems quite willing to take—may constitute a new low in legal ethics. If we are to accept Alan Dershowitz's comment that a defense attorney should pursue an acquittal "without regard to the consequences" as the goal of American law, I think it's time the American Bar Association revises its code of ethics.

SEYMOUR WHITELAW
San Francisco, Calif.

The dishonorable tactics of O. J. Simpson's attorneys demonstrate why the legal profession is so widely despised, as are all the TV consultants praising such criminal irresponsibility as "smart defense." Alan Dershowitz's statement that winning is everything and consequences do not matter ignores reality so high-handedly that fate is probably just itching to slap him down.

I urge Detective Mark Fuhrman to hang in there. Truth is a weapon so powerful that the slowness of its fruition matters little in the end. O. J. Simpson may go free, but he will be poor, for his fortune will be transferred to the lawyers representing him. And the defense attorneys, in their apparent belief that money can buy anything, disregard the ancient mills of God, which grind slowly yet grind exceeding small. Money has never halted that relentless process.

EDITH HAMILTON
Summerville, S.C.

Jeffrey Toobin's refreshing coverage of the defense strategy options for O. J. Simpson is the first ethically presented article that I have encountered in the midst of otherwise unmitigated yellow journalism. Mr. Toobin presents both sides of the case in a manner that is far more becoming to our criminal-justice system than the circuslike atmosphere that characterizes domestic-violence investigations and court proceedings. Winning this case on trumped-up allegations of discrimination would neither exonerate Mr. Simpson nor give him peace of mind. This tactic is insulting to the African-American community and trivializes the terror in which battered women and their children live—and die—in this country.

E. BISHAY
Sacramento, Calif.

Jeffrey Toobin wrote that the Simpson defense theory that Detective Mark Fuhrman planted the bloody glove at the Simpson estate was "monstrous." In willingly serving as a defense mouthpiece to give wider circulation to what he himself described as a "monstrous" theory, Mr. Toobin was practicing bad journalism.

After going on to describe as "even more monstrous" the defense theory that Fuhrman was motivated by racism, Toobin predicted that "if race does be-

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come a significant factor in this case—if the case becomes transformed from a mere soap opera to a civil-rights melodrama; that is, from the Menendez brothers writ large to Rodney King redux—then the stakes will change dramatically." In choosing to publish the Toobin article—and so help bring about the very calamity that Toobin fears—the editors of *The New Yorker* were irresponsible.

MURRAY S. FLANDER
Vienna, Va.

That O. J. Simpson's lawyers should attack the already weak ability of the County of Los Angeles to hold a criminal trial without the threat of riots is reprehensible yet not totally surprising, considering current sharp legal practices. But that a reputable, highly regarded magazine like *The New Yorker* should lend its pages to such a use came as a total surprise.

I hope that another defense strategy that has been predicted—trashing Nicole Simpson—will not be set forth in your magazine, no matter how "new and provocative" its premise. Perhaps a strong judge will order press, prosecution, and defense to behave suitably.

MARIE ANDERSON
Norwalk, Calif.

Jeffrey Toobin replies:

In my article I reported that O. J. Simpson's defense team planned to argue that the evidence gathered by a Los Angeles police officer, Detective Mark Fuhrman, was tainted because Detective Fuhrman was a racist. Last week, on August 29th, one of Simpson's lawyers, Johnnie L. Cochran, made precisely that argument. Citing the same records that were mentioned in my article, Mr. Cochran told Judge Lance A. Ito that because Fuhrman "harbors racial animosity toward African-Americans" the defense should be entitled to examine his military and police personnel records. Judge Ito decided last week to deny the defense's request. Nonetheless, the heart of my story was neither a theory nor a manipulation; it was, for better or worse, a fact.

Letters should be as brief as possible, and sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to "In the Mail," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. They may be edited for length and clarity.

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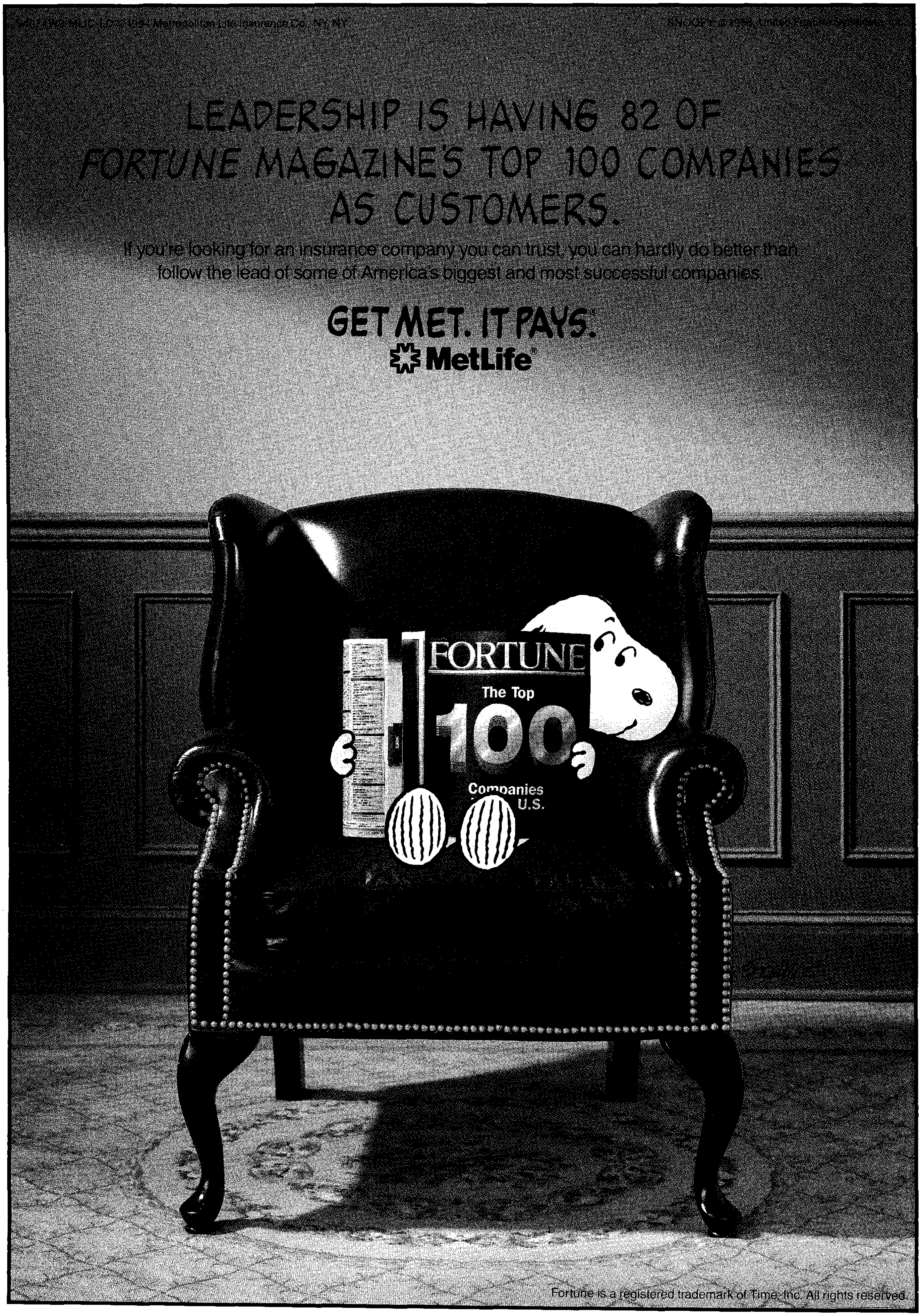
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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THE THEATRE

Stand-Ins

THE line between outlandish casting and surreal props will be effectively erased at the International Festival of Puppet Theatre, at the Public and P.S. 122 during the next two weeks. For instance, the male leads in Hanne Tierney's version of Gertrude Stein's "A Play Called Not and Now" will be played by vacuum-cleaner hoses. Masks, bicycles, exploding packages, and shadow puppets made of sheets of zinc play important roles in other festival offerings. Of course, more traditional puppets will also be pressed into service: small, realistic figures will perform Strindberg's "The Ghost Sonata," and nearly life-size wooden puppets will enact a South African work titled "Woyzeck on the Highveld." This is the second festival (the first took place here in 1992), and it has enlisted more than twenty wildly various puppet-theatre groups in a lively survey of an art that is not just for children.

The woman pulling the strings for the festival is executive producer Cheryl Henson, a daughter of the late Muppet-master Jim Henson. As a woman born to puppetry, Ms. Henson is an advocate of its limitless possibilities. "A puppet exists when you take an inanimate object and give it the illusion of life, usually through the human body," she says. "Puppeteers are people interested in designing their own reality." Henson's lineup—including puppeteers from Italy, Japan, Peru, Bosnia, and France—shows that those realities can be shared across boundaries of language and culture more easily than those of just about any other kind of drama.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

First Night—Lannyl Stephens and Daniel McDonald in a romantic comedy by Jack Neary. Previews through Sept. 10. Opens Sept. 11 at 7. (Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

King Lear—The Pearl Theatre Company's first show in its new home. Robert Hock has the title role. Previews begin Sept. 8. (Theatre 80, at 80 St. Mark's Pl. 645-7708.)

Laughing Matters—Nick Ullett's one-man show about acting, advertising, marriage, and other matters. Preview on Sept. 7. Opens Sept. 8 at 8. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-7471.)

Philadelphia, Here I Come!—The Roundabout Theatre Company's revival of Brian Friel's 1966 play, with Milo O'Shea, Robert Sean Leonard, Jim True, and Pauline Flanagan. Joe Dowling directed. Two previews on Sept. 7. Opens Sept. 8 at 8. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

The Secretaries—A comedy, set in the office of an Oregon lumber mill, written and performed by the Five Lesbian Brothers (Maureen Angelos, Babs Davy, Dominique Dibbell, Peg Healey, and Lisa Kron). Previews begin Sept. 8. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 302-6989.)

"Shut Up! Little Man," at the Thread Waxing Space.

JIM FISH

OPENED RECENTLY

All in the Timing—Six sparkling short plays by David Ives add up to one enchanted evening. Ives and the deft director, Jason McConnell Buzas, are wonderfully served by their actors. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

. . . And the Carnival Erupted!—A musical conceived and directed by Jorge Alí Triana, with a score by German Arrieta. Performed in Spanish; simultaneous English translation is available. (Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2850.)

Beauty and the Beast—Disney's Broadway money-spinner, adapted from the animated-film version, has a few moments of solid-gold theatrical amazement: the showstopping "Be Our Guest" production number and the Beast's transformation into the Prince. Directed by Robert Jess Roth. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/2/94.) (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100.)

Carousel—Nicholas Hytner's authoritative direction combines with Bob Crowley's inspired sets to transplant the National Theatre's 1993 smash hit onto the Vivian Beaumont stage. Bold, beautiful, and controversial, this multicultural reinterpretation launches Rodgers and Hammerstein toward the twenty-first century. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

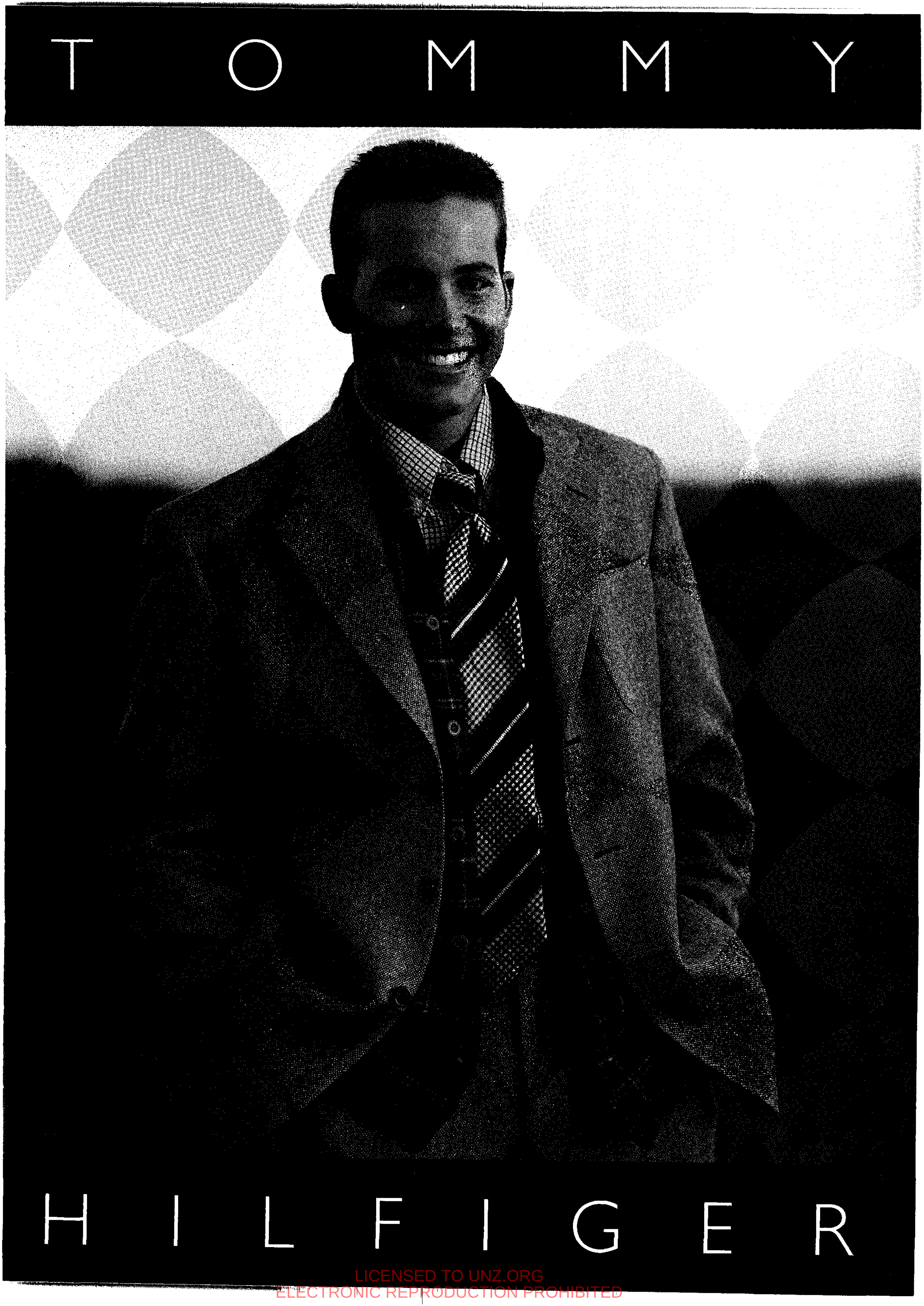
Damn Yankees—The big musical hit of 1955 is back, in its first Broadway revival. George Abbott and Douglass Wallop's book has been jarringly updated by the director, Jack O'Brien (with the help of the hundred-and-six-year-old Mr. Abbott). But the cast delivers Richard Adler and Jerry Ross's music with sporty energy, and Rob Marshall has created some lively dance numbers. (4/4/94) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

Faith Journey—A gospel musical, set in the South during the civil-rights movement. Book and lyrics by Clarence Cuthbertson and George Broderick, who also wrote the music. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

Final Curtain—Arlene Sterne's one-woman show about the actresses Sarah Bernhardt, Ellen Terry, and Eleanora Duse. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 279-4200. Sundays and Mondays only.)

Grease!—The talented cast and the inventive production team show off the gleeful phonyness of Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey's musical with unembarrassed affection, and the result is a fun fake that's not trying to pass as the real thing. Rosie O'Donnell is very likable as the tough-talking Rizzo, and Billy Porter blows the lid off the joint with his Little Richard-like rendition of "Beauty School Dropout." Jeff Calhoun directed and choreographed. (5/30/94) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

Hysterical Blindness and Other Southern Tragedies That Have Plagued My Life Thus Far—An autobiographical musical-comedy revue written by Leslie Jordan and starring Mark Baker. It's a tale of growing up Tennessean,


TOMMY
HILFIGER

THE THEATRE-Cont'd

thespian, and gay. Joe Patrick Ward's energetic musical numbers run the gamut from corn to gospel. (Playhouse on Vandam, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555.)

An Inspector Calls—J. B. Priestley's 1945 mystery is not really a play—it's a speech, about every man's link to every other man. The fine cast, which includes Kenneth Cranham, Philip Bosco, and Jane Adams, has ideas, not actions, to play. Directed by Stephen Daldry. (5/16/94) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Jackie Mason: Politically Incorrect—A former rabbi from a family of rabbis, Mason uses the stage as his bully pulpit. Behind his shtick, which is sometimes vulgar but always funny, is a fundamentalist disgust at the world's fraud, wickedness, hypocrisy, and inhumanity. (4/25/94) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

International Festival of Puppet Theatre.

Jelly Roll!—Vernel Bagneris stars in an expanded version of a musical show about Jelly Roll Morton, recently seen at Michael's Pub. With Morten Gunnar Larsen on piano. (47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 777-7474.)

The Keepers—A drama by Barbara Lebow, set in Maine in the eighteen-fifties. Presented by Jean Cocteau Repertory. (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

King Ubu—The Independent Theatre Company's production of Alfred Jarry's 1896 farce. Translated from the French by George Rand. (House of Candles Theatre, 99 Stanton St. 353-3088.)

Passion—Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's listless epistolary musical, in which the main characters spend much of their time singing love letters to and from each other. Jere Shere and Marin Mazzie are in fine voice as a dashing soldier and his lover, and Donna Murphy gives a stunning performance as Fosca, the predatory heroine. Lapine, who wrote the libretto, directed. (5/23/94) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Stomp—A group of eight British rhythm specialists who use unconventional percussion instruments. The noise is terrific. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

That's Life!—A seriocomic revue about the variety of Jewish life in America. Thirteen composers and lyricists collaborated on the twenty musical numbers. The choreography and direction are by Helen Butleroff. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

Three Tall Women—A moving, poetic play by Edward Albee, which is dominated by the huge, heroic performance of Myra Carter. Jordan Baker and the droll and delightful Marian Seldes are also in the cast. (5/16/94) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200.)

LONG RUNS

ANGELS IN AMERICA: "Millennium Approaches" and "Perestroika." (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.) . . . **BLOOD BROTHERS:** Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **GUYS AND DOLLS:** Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN:** Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **NUNSENSE:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200. . . . **THE WHO'S TOMMY:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

International Festival of Puppet Theatre—At the Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7150). Sept. 7-8 at 7:30 and Sept. 9-10 at 8: The Handspring Puppet Company, of South Africa. . . . Sept. 7-9 at 8: Hanne Tierney offers a version of Gertrude Stein's "A Play Called Not and Now." . . . Sept. 7-9 at 8, Sept. 10 at 3 and 8, and Sept. 11 at 1 and 3: Teatro Hugo and Ines. . . . Sept. 7-8 at 8, Sept. 9 at 7 and 10, and Sept. 10 at 7: Japan's Dondoro company. . . . Sept. 7-8 at 7:30, Sept. 9-10 at 7 and 10, and Sept. 11 at 7: Sweden's Marionetteatern presents "The Ghost Sonata." . . . Sept. 11 at 7 and Sept. 12-14 at 8: Italy's Teatro Gioco Vita. . . . Sept. 12-15 at 8: Atlanta's Suzy Ferriss. . . . Sept. 13-17 at 8:30: Banialuka, the State Puppet Theatre of Poland. . . . ¶ At P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. (477-5288). Sept. 8-11 at 8: Jon Ludwig's "Safe as Milk." . . . Sept. 9-10 at 10: Experimental puppet theatre. (The festival continues through Sept. 18.) . . . **NOTE:** The above events are geared toward adults. For the festival's children's shows, see the listings in For Kids.

Tip or Die—A one-woman show by Linda Mancini, performance artist and former waitress. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202. Thursdays through Sundays at 7:30. Through Sept. 25.)

Shut Up! Little Man—Gregg Gibbs wrote and directed this show, which is based on the conversations (taped on the sly) of someone's next-door neighbors in a San Francisco apartment building. (Thread Waxing Space, 476 Broadway. 966-9520. Thursdays through Sundays at 8:30. Through Sept. 18.)

DANCE

À la Recherche

A COUPLE of weeks ago, on one of the doggiest of August days, Merce Cunningham was messing around in a drawer full of notes, in search of lost time. Having just returned from Vienna, where the Merce Cunningham Dance Company had given a performance marking the thirtieth anniversary of the first Event (as their ninety-minute intermissionless evenings of dance excerpts and novelties are known), the venerable choreographer was trying to recall exactly what he and his dancers had been doing back in their early days together. When the troupe kicks off the fall dance season with a series of Events (September 13-18, at the Joyce Theatre), the material will be drawn from repertory that ranges from 1964 to the present. It will change gradually as the week progresses, Cunningham says, "like a metamorphosis, something like a plant changing. It is very difficult to rehearse."

Audiences might think of an Event as paradigmatic Cunningham—dance for its own innately theatrical sake, with the décor and music leading separate, if overlapping, lives—but that's not what the choreographer blithely suggests. "I guess if they thought of it as a vaudeville show it might be better," he says.

Merce Cunningham Dance Company—The opening performance of a one-week engagement. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Sept. 13 at 8. Through Sept. 18.)

"Women Along the River: New Dance from the South Asian Diaspora"—A weekend of works by two Indian women choreographers. Sept. 8 and Sept. 10 at 8:30: Chandralekha's "Yantra." . . . ¶ Sept. 9 and Sept. 11 at 8:30: Deepti Gupta's "Quanta." (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194.)

Ann Carlson—Presenting "A Mirage." (Brooklyn Bridge Anchorage, Cadman Plaza West at Front St., Brooklyn. Sept. 9-10 at 7:30 and Sept. 11 at 3. For information about tickets, call 206-6674, ext. 261. Through Sept. 18.)

Shäm Mosher—In "Breath of the Earth," a performance piece in which Mosher, four other dancers, and musicians lead the audience through the park. (Meets at the Prospect Park Picnic House, Prospect Park W. at 3rd St., Brooklyn. Sept. 9 at at 10:30 A.M. and Sept. 10-11 at 2. No tickets necessary.)

RUTU MODAN

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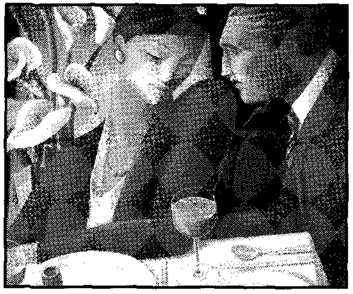

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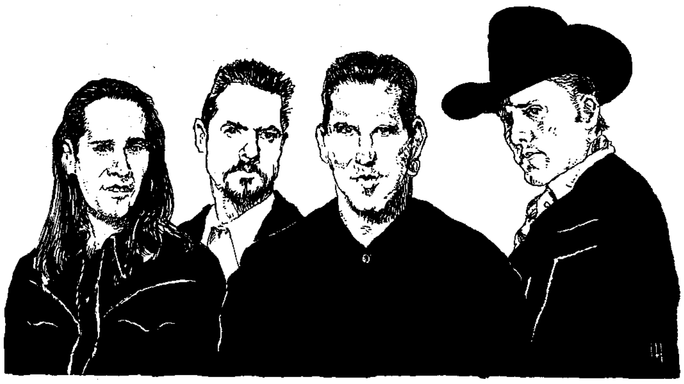
NIGHT LIFE

Crying Out Loud

THE Mavericks are passing through town again, which is great news for fans of the best new country band around. The quartet is appearing September 9 at Tramps, where they delivered a scorching two-and-a-half-hour set last February. A lot has happened since then. The group's bass player, Robert Reynolds, married Trisha Yearwood. The band has been on Letterman and all over the hipper radio stations, and their brilliant second album, "What a Crying Shame," has slowly worked its way up to the Top Ten on the country-music charts, earning a gold record in the process. It's a sweet victory for a band whose non-generic sound is based on equal parts Nashville roots and cool rock and roll.



The Mavericks at Tramps.

JARRETT HUDDLESTON

It may sound like a standard pop-music success story, but the Mavericks' origins could hardly be less typical. The band was formed five years ago in Miami, and its lead singer, Raul Malo, is the son of Cuban immigrants. Malo, whose deep, mournful voice can handle everything from an understated, lovelorn ballad to an Orbison wail, discovered his calling at one of Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the U.S.A." concerts, and he decided to try to infuse country with Springsteen's kind of passion. The Mavericks acknowledged the inspiration by including a killer cover of "All That Heaven Will Allow" on the new album, and they follow Springsteen's lead by offering long, spirited, and spontaneous shows instead of the anemic, programmed sets that are the country-music norm. Best of all is the flawless songwriting that makes "What a Crying Shame" a start-to-finish triumph.

CONCERTS

BOZ SCAGGS—Back in the seventies, after a stint as rhythm guitarist in the Steve Miller Band, Scaggs established himself as a silky-smooth soft-rock artist with a serious, and occasionally inspired, R. & B. jones. Since 1980, his recordings have been sporadic and inconsistent, but earlier this year he released the surprisingly fine "Some Change," which finds his songwriting, guitar work, and tangy, ingratiating voice in top form. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Sept. 10-11 at 8.)

KENNY BARRON—Winter Garden, World Financial Center, Battery Park City. Sept. 7 at 6:30. No tickets necessary.

YES—Jones Beach Theatre. 1-516 221-1000. Sept. 8 at 8. . . . ¶ Madison Square Garden. 465-6741. Sept. 10 at 8.

COOLIO / HEAVY D. / WARREN G—With R. Kelly and Aaliyah. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6741. Sept. 9 at 7:30.)

KENNY G.—Jones Beach Theatre. Sept. 9 at 8.

TRAFFIC—With the Subdudes. (Paramount, Madison Square Garden. 465-6741. Sept. 9 at 8. . . . ¶ Jones Beach Theatre. Sept. 10 at 8.)

JAMES BROWN—Apollo Theatre, 253 W. 125th St. 864-0372. Sept. 9-13 at 8.

ASWAD—With Jazzhole. (Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. Sept. 9 at 10. For tickets, call 307-7171.)

JUAN GABRIEL—Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. Sept. 10-11 at 8.

CLUBS

A.K.A., 77 W. Houston St., at Wooster St. (673-7325)—On Sept. 10, catch **JAZZHOLE**, an undulating acid-jazz collective with enough musicians, vocalists, and rappers to start a small country, with the **FUNKY POETS**.

BLARNEY STAR, 43 Murray St. (732-2873)—Home to fine Irish music every Friday night. On Sept. 9: an evening of fiddle and piano with ***SEAN AND LOUIS QUINN***.

BROWNIES, 169 Avenue A., at 10th St. (429-8392)—Inching closer and closer to respectability, this former East Village dive now features a new stage, a beefed-up P.A. system, and a steady lineup of hardcore bands so hungry for the big money you can see the dollar signs in their eyes. On Sept. 8: **THE VELDT**. Spend an evening with **GOD IS MY CO-PILOT** and **VINELAND** on Sept. 10.

CAFÉ SIN-É, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—A small peach-walled storefront, Sin-é is usually given over to a young, earthy crowd that drinks Rolling Rock or espresso and waits for some Irish musician or other to blow in and play a set. Singer-songwriter **CAROLINE HORN** is in on Sept. 10.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Rock and roll always sounds best in a dump, which may be why this legendary club is still thriving. Sept. 10 belongs to **PLEASE**. . . . ¶ Next door, at CB's Gallery, **JOHN ZORN'S MASADA**, the saxophonist's ongoing klezmer project, with guest guitarist Marc Ribot, continues through Sept. 11, as does the Japanese band **THE RUINS**.

CHICAGO B.L.U.E.S., 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (924-9755)—A new palace dedicated to the music of the windy city. On Sept. 7-10, drop in on **MICHAEL COLEMAN AND THE BACKBREAKERS**.

THE COOLER, 416 W. 14th St. (229-0785)—Deep in the heart of the meat district, an authentic old locker has been converted into a comfortable lavender and stainless-steel paradise. On Sept. 9-10: a weekend of post-modern guitar. On Friday, catch Sonic Youth thrashmeister **THURSTON MOORE**, followed by Ambitious Lover **ARTO LINDSAY**, on Saturday. Every Monday in September, local heavyweights **DANNY BLUME** and **BEN PEROWSKY** curate a free evening of noise and art. On Sept. 12: a screening of "Nosferatu," with live music by **BITE SIZE BETTY** and **SHACK**.

DON HILL'S, 511 Greenwich St. (219-2850)—On Sept. 10: **SPECIAL HEAD** drops in.

DUPLEX, 61 Christopher St., at Seventh Ave. (255-5438)—Everyone is a star here—the pianist, the bartender, the waiters, and the audience. The fabulous **LADY BUNNY** is your hostess every Tuesday.

EIGHTY EIGHT'S, 228 W. 10th St. (924-0088)—On Sept. 10: don't miss disco diva **VICKIE SUE ROBINSON**, who is best remembered for bringing the world "Turn the Beat Around."

FEZ, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—A comfortable neo-Moroccan bar hidden inside the Time Café. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is a fine spot to take in a show. On Sept. 10: a duo composed of ex-Del Fuegos front man **DAN ZANES** and noted knob twirler **MITCHELL FROOM** (Paul McCartney, Richard Thompson, Crowded House), who plays organ. **THE INDIANS** will also appear. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

FLANNERY'S, 205 W. 14th St. (929-9589)—A well-scrubbed, amiable Irish pub with many of the classic features (pints of Guinness, non-stop TV sports) and a few of the near-classics (a CD jukebox, a portrait of Elvis).

GONZALEZ Y GONZALEZ, 625 Broadway, at Houston St. (473-8787)—Loud, brash, and big—de rigueur for the lower-Broadway dining scene. The stage is in the rear, about a city block from the entrance.

IRVING PLAZA, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—This sprawling two-floor establishment has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off Broadway theatre. Australian rockers **HOODOO GURUS** bring their sloppy, stimulating brand of psychedelic power punk here on Sept. 7. On Sept. 8: the **BOGMEN**. On Sept. 9, be sure not to miss **ME'SHELL NDEGÉOCELLO**. Best known as the sultry guest vocalist on John Mellencamp's current hit version of Van Morrison's "Wild Night," Ndegéocello was also one of last year's most talked-about new artists. On her début album, "Plantation Lullabies" (1993), this gifted young singer-rapper-songwriter (who also plays slamming bass) set her resonant, assured alto against a moody mélange of rock, jazz, and R. & B. that evoked all the romance and squalor of urban life. Performed live, her songs of love and angst are even more impressive. . . . ¶ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday night, at the Continental Club. The dancers all share a passion for the Lindy Hop, a dance that involves a lot of whirling and the occasional display of underwear. Sets from eight until midnight. For information on the society, call 696-9737.

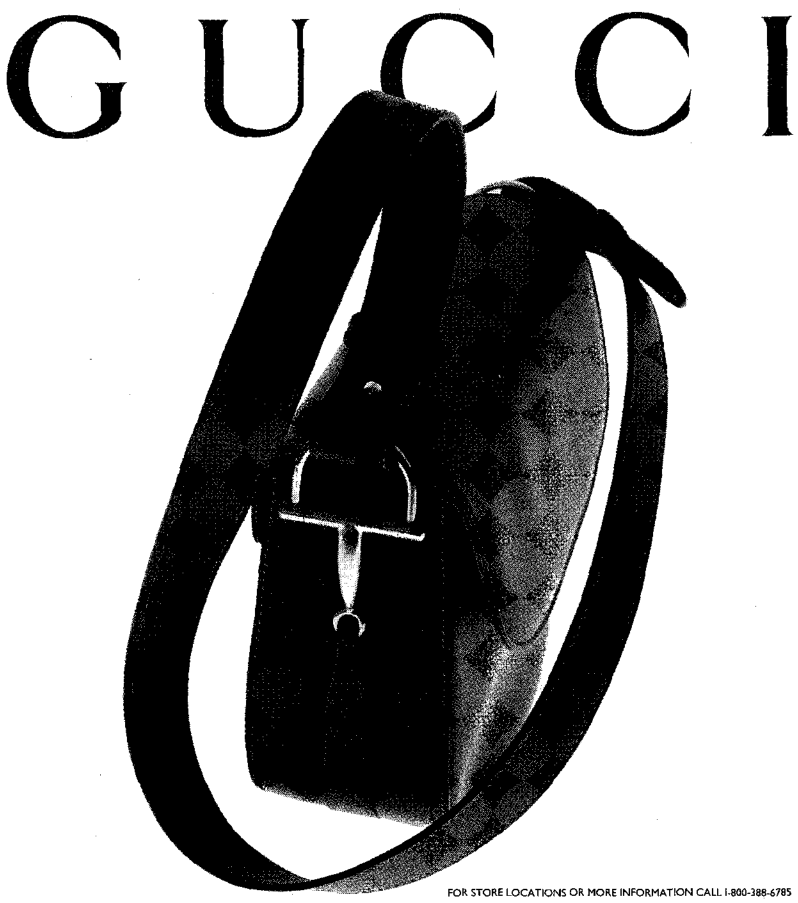
LIMELIGHT, Sixth Ave. at 20th St. (807-7850)—A church turned eighties hot spot, this unholy venue currently plays host to a variety of techno and alternative acts. **VAPOURSPACE** arrives on Sept. 13, with Prototype 909 and Azonic (featuring Bill Laswell and Andy Hawkins). Wednesday night is Disco 2000.

LUDLOW STREET CAFÉ, 165 Ludlow St. (353-0536)—An unassuming basement restaurant-bar, where you can drink cheap and catch live music nightly. Mondays belong to **BEAT RODEO**, a straight-shooting bar band that plays a mixture of country, blues, Dylan, Byrds, Velvets, and various pop curiosities.

MANNY'S CAR WASH, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—The Upper East Side Blues. **LIL' ED & THE BLUES IMPERIALS** arrive on Sept. 8, followed by the **ANTHONY KANE BLUES BAND** on Sept. 9, and, on Sept. 10, the **ROADSIDE BANDITOS**.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—Many of the bands that play here today will be playing somewhere more expensive tomorrow. Hoboken faves the **CUCUMBERS** are here on Sept. 9. The Cucumbers play delicately sweet pop, and the majority of their songs eschew fat, distorted guitar notes in favor of twangy country-flavored elements, like banjo, mandolin, and forlorn vocals. On Sept. 10, catch the cleverly goofy antics of the **FLESHTONES**.

MERCURY LOUNGE, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—Downtown's newest little club that could. Beyond the long bar, you'll find a dimly lit exposed-brick room with a stage that's been brimming with some very hip acts. **COMBUSTIBLE EDISON** is in the house on Sept. 8. The first band to feature a signature drink recipe on its CD cover (two ounces brandy, one ounce Campari, one ounce fresh lemon juice; ignite brandy, pour into a shaker full of cracked ice, etc.), the



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self-proclaimed "suave and sybaritic" Combustible Edison is the most convincing of the new cocktail-lounge sophisticates. The band's music is a kitschy libation consisting of equal parts vibraphone, Farfisa organ, melodica, bossa-nova bongos, surf guitar (played by a besuited James Bond-type called the Millionaire), and torchy vocals, courtesy of Miss Lily Banquette.

Paddy Reilly's Music Bar, 519 Second Ave., at 29th St. (686-1210)—**BLACK 47** usually plays on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and Speir Mor (Gaelic for Big Sky) performs for a hearty following on Fridays. Séisiún—a traditional Irish jam—is on Thursday nights.

Les Poulets, 16 W. 22nd St. (229-2000)—The name may be French, but the music here is Latin: expect salsa, merengue, and the occasional cha-cha. On Sept. 10: **JOHNNY RAY** and **VICTOR CRUZ.** Dining.

Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (247-0200)—Ballroom dancing on Thursdays and Sundays. The rest of the week: another dark, sweaty rock club, with flannel-clad stage divers and the occasional whirling mosh pit.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif, dedicated to calypso, reggae, and bossa nova. Funk icon **MACEO PARKER** is here on Sept. 7-8. Parker honed his chops working with James Brown in the sixties and Parliament-Funkadelic in the seventies. In between those earth-shaking gigs, the tenor saxophonist found some funk of his own—namely, Maceo & All the King's Men—establishing his impeccable prowess as a bandleader. Closed Sundays. Dining.

Supper Club, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—Upstairs at this gilt and lamé club is the Blue Room, a plush little nook with celestial wallpaper, far from the midtown racket. The cult of **JONATHAN RICHMAN** need be advised that the nutty, wacky, but deeply sensitive ditty-bopper will be holding court on Sept. 10, with special guest **JULIA** ("Pat") **SWEENEY.** Thursday nights belong to **GIANT STEP,** a roving collective of musicians, rappers, and d.j.s who mix jazz, funk, and hip-hop.

Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—This broad, spacious, and agreeable club offers a consistent lineup of blues greats. Those cool-rocking country daddies the **MAVERICKS** play on Sept. 9, with guests **MAC MC ANALLY** and Gillian Welch & David Rawlings. **THE FALL** appears on Sept. 10, with Magnapop and Run On. Hugely popular in England, the Fall is one of the few original New Wave bands that has managed to remain consistently unpredictable and biting throughout the past fifteen years. Much of this can be attributed to the band's ability to trample every genre it invades—on a given night the Fall will happily stumble from hardcore to hip-hop. But the chaos is all kept in check by the hectoring monotone of vocalist Mark E. Smith. An acquired and addictive taste, but one well worth sampling. Monday nights, Tramps hosts Soul Kitchen, an evening of seventies funk and R. & B.

Webster Hall, 125 E. 11th St. (353-1600)—A byzantine disco wonderland with four floors, a coffee shop, and a wig boutique. Wednesday is drag night. Psychedelic Thursdays feature grunge acts and cheap beer.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—On Sept. 10: **GOVERNMENT MULE,** featuring Warren Haynes, Allen Woody, and Matt Abts.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—On Sept. 8-10: a weekend with Argentinian diva **MARIKENA MONTI,** featuring an early show by **PHILLIP OFFICER.** Dining.

Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—An airy two-tiered space with pastel walls and potted greenery. Sept. 9-10 belongs to the **STEVE WILSON** quintet. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through Sept. 11: the **JOHN SCOFIELD** quartet and the **GATEWAY TRIO.** Ace jazz guitarist Scofield never completely severed his R. & B. ties, and with his latest recording, "Hand Jive," he's returned to them full force. As for the the Gateway Trio, this seventies ECM supergroup—drummer Jack DeJohnette, bassist Dave Holland, and guitarist John Abercrombie—can no doubt still spontaneously interact, with sixth-sense precision. The great **STÉPHANE GRAPPELLI** begins on Sept. 12. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—On Sept. 10: the **PHAROAH SANDERS NEW YORK ENSEMBLE.**

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—On any given night, and well into the morning, one or another of New York's many formidable pianists can be found here. **JAMES WILLIAMS, BILLY PIERCE,** and **PETER WASHINGTON** are here Sept. 7-10. Pianist Williams and saxophonist Pierce were bandmates, along with Wynton Marsalis, in the marvellous early-eighties edition of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers. They'll be joined for this engagement by another ex-Messenger, Washington, who's the most reliable bassist in town. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—In Bemelmans Bar, the charming and debonair **KURT WIETING** presides at the piano.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—One of the city's top jazz spots. On Sept. 7-11: the **GEORGE COLEMAN** quintet. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL** leads a trio. Dining.

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven, 57 E. 57th St. (758-5757)—A cool, sumptuous piano-and-bass room in the Four Seasons Hotel, with twenty-two-foot-high ceilings, a long backlit bar stocked with single-malt Scotch, and fine jazz seven nights a week. Wednesdays through Saturdays, **DONALD JOHNSTON** is the featured pianist. Dining.

Five Spot, 4 W. 31st St. (631-0100)—On Sept. 9-10: an evening of Latin jazz with **CURARE.** Dining.

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—On Sept. 8-10, catch **SANTI DEBRIANO'S PANAMANIACS.** This outfit unites Debriano, a fine bassist, with some other first-class musicians, including pianist Daniel Perez and saxophonist David Sanchez—who, like Debriano, is interested in examining the Latin-jazz interchange. **TESS MARSALIS** is in on Sept. 11. The **RUSSELL GUNN** quartet plays on Sept. 13. This week's new trumpet whiz kid, Gunn has already tested his mettle with the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—**ROLAND HANNA** teams up with **PAUL WEST** through Sept. 10.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—On Sept. 8-9: the **ARTO LINDSAY** band. Hidden beneath Lindsay's hipster-doofus persona lies the heart of a frustrated guitar hero. His gigs at the Knitting Factory are far less predictable than his occasionally precious noodling with the Ambitious Lovers. On Sept 13: **NEIL ROLNICK** and **DOCTOR NERVE,** a seven-piece combo.

Le Madeleine, 403 W. 43rd St. (246-2993)—Every Sunday evening, guitar great **GENE BERTONCINI** lights up this cozy Hell's Kitchen bistro with his simmering melodicism and chordal grace.

Metropolis, 31 Union Square W. (675-2300)—Monday nights belong to **CON-TRI-BUTION,** a reggae-tinged jazz collective. The **CLAUDE (FIDDLER) WILLIAMS KANSAS CITY SWING QUARTET** performs on Sept. 8. Williams is the real deal, a blues-drenched violinist whose career dates back to the thirties, Kansas City's golden age. Williams was briefly in Count Basie's original band, and his undiminished playing can still evoke the splendor that that collaboration surely produced. On Sept. 9-10: the **JOANNE BRACKEEN** quartet. Having been on the scene for four decades now, Brackeen keeps growing, her bandleading and writing skills perfectly in sync with her sharp modernist piano stylings.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A plush, old-fashioned night club, sixty-five floors above it all, complete with Art Deco fixtures, intimate glitter, and a panoramic view as dizzying as the tab. Singer-pianist **ANN HAMPTON CALLAWAY** appears through Sept. 17. Closed Mondays.

Smalls, 183 W. 10th St. (929-7565)—A new contender in New York's ever-changing jazz topography, this aptly named club features young and up-and-coming players jamming late into the night. On Sept. 8-10: **SAM NEWSOME** appears.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—The **T. S. MONK** sextet continues through Sept. 11. One of the tastiest pleasures to emerge in recent years has been Monk's self-contained small group, dedicated to championing overlooked classics of the hard-bop repertory, as well as more recent compositions in that tradition. Beginning Sept. 13: the **CEDAR WALTON** trio. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter **MILES EVANS** is in action on Mondays. Dining.

Tatou, 151 E. 50th St. (753-1144)—The **NAT JONES** trio entertains every weekend. Dining.

Tavern on the Green, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—Sept. 7-11 belongs to the **RAY ALEXANDER** sextet. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through Sept. 11: the **DON BYRON** quintet. The clarinettist has been drawing attention lately with his Mickey Katz klezmer project, but his band for this engagement will concentrate on Byron's own far-ranging take on contemporary jazz. Legendary bassist **RON CARTER** begins a one-week run on Sept. 13. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

Visiones, 125 Macdougal St., at W. 3rd St. (673-5576)—On Sept. 7-8: **ED SCHULLER & THE ELEVENTH HOUR BAND.** Vocalist **KEVIN MAHOGANY'S** group is in on Sept. 9-11. Mahogany's got great taste; on his newly released album, "Songs and Moments," the covers range from Milton Nascimento to Wes Montgomery. For this engagement, the singer will also have a top-drawer band—complete with a four-piece horn section—backing him up.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—On Sept. 6-10: a trio featuring **SONNY FORTUNE, JOHN HICKS,** and **DAVID WILLIAMS.**

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ART

Dark Ladies

GIVEN the subject, it is perhaps inevitable that the current exhibition at the Galerie St. Etienne—"Three Berlin Artists of the Weimar Era: Hannah Höch, Käthe Kollwitz, Jeanne Mammen"—should be viewed from a sociopolitical perspective. After all, Weimar Germany was a fractured, doomed place; anguished political commentary was often the explicit agenda of these three artists. That this show features only women suggests a quasi-feminist mission, too.

Each artist seems to address herself to a particular female viewpoint. The best known of this trio is Käthe Kollwitz, whose lugubrious proletarian woodcuts depict the poverty and suffering of women and children. Her lithographs and drawings are more engaging in their expressionistic torment, but they sometimes touch absurd extremes of bathetic kitsch. In Jeanne Mammen's watercolors, by contrast, we enter a radically different social and spiritual world, one of pinched-face, painted, mannequinlike women. Her social chronicles reinforce the popular conception of the Weimar years: imagine Liza Minnelli belting out "Life is a Cabaret" to a roomful of bored showgirls and sullen lesbians.

Kollwitz and Mammen both rely on conventional modes: an art of social concern in one case, that of sardonic commentary in the other. Hannah Höch's collages, however, represent the cusp of the Dadaist avant-garde, and are as good as anything by Ernst or Schwitters. As in Mammen's work, the Weimar *neue Frauen*, or flappers, are on parade, but Höch cuts the figures up, decomposing them into wandering made-up eyes and lips. Her jittery, mechanized automata remain among the starkest emblems of the time.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—Gowns, daywear, and costume jewelry by Madame Grès, a French designer active from 1930 to 1988, will be on display in the Costume Institute. Opens Sept. 13. . . . ¶ "Pharaoh's Gifts: Stone Vessels from Ancient Egypt." . . . ¶ "Four Silk Kashan Rugs." In the sixteenth century, the Persian city of Kashan produced magnificent silk carpets, most likely for the royal palace. Only twenty of them have survived, four of which belong to the Met. Three are based on traditional medallion designs; one depicts fierce tigers and fantastic animals attacking cattle and deer. Displayed together for the first time, the four rugs provide a rare glimpse into a vanished world of imperial splendor. . . . ¶ "Dali: The Early Years." It is fashionable to dismiss the Spanish Surrealist Salvador Dali (1904-89) as a purveyor of schlock, yet his brilliant, visionary early works are as original and influential as any produced by Surrealism. The show includes a video installation of scenes from "Un Chien Andalou," Dali's historic collaboration with Buñuel. Through Sept. 18. . . . ¶ The Annenberg collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist works includes paintings by Picasso and Renoir. . . . ¶ Masterpieces from the museum's furniture collection, including a Mies van der Rohe tubular-steel armchair. Through Oct. 9. . . . ¶ "American Impressionism and Realism: Drawings, Prints, and Photographs" features work from the museum's collection. . . . ¶ "Divine Protection: Batak Art of North Sumatra." Seventy primarily wooden works from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, ranging from a three-inch-square ritual book to puppets. . . . ¶ The roof garden, complete with sculptures, is open through the end of October. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—An exhibit of movie stills, from films ranging from "Intolerance" (1916) to "Danton" (1983). Through Oct. 4. . . . ¶ "Sense and Sensibility: Women Artists and Minimalism in the Nineties" recasts the movement's formal problems in terms of femininity and domesticity. Through Sept. 11. . . . ¶ "Modern British Drawings: Selections from the Collection." The portraits in this summer exhibition—Gaudier-Brzeska's charcoal of Wyndham Lewis, a pair of self-portraits by Lewis and William Roberts, Frank Auerbach's "Head of Catherine Lampert VI"—speak most forcefully. Gilbert and George offer a heavy-handed satire of the British sporting portrait featuring a lampoon of art-worshipping pomposity that reads "To Be with Art Is All We Ask." Through Sept. 13. . . . ¶ "Lee Friedlander: Letters from the People." Friedlander's messages are black-and-white photographs of letters of the alphabet, numbers, commercial signs, and graffiti. Through Sept. 11. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"The Tradition of the New: Post-War Masterpieces from the Guggenheim Collection." An amble up the ramp begins with Abstract Expressionism and ends with minimalism. Detours out of the rotunda include a room devoted to Donald Judd (1928-94) and one to Joseph Beuys (1921-1986), both of whom are well represented in the permanent collection. Through Sept. 11. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6, and Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A retrospective of more than two hundred paintings and works on paper by Joseph Stella (1877-1946), the American Futurist. Through Oct. 9. (A complementary show opens Sept. 10 at the Kraushaar gallery.) . . . ¶ "From the Collection: Photography, Sculpture, and Paintings." Includes work by Nan Goldin, Sally Mann, Agnes Martin, and Ad Reinhardt. . . . ¶ "Edward Hopper and Jack Pierson: American Dreaming." Two devotees of forlorn, sad-sack Americana. For this installment of the Collection in Context series, the Whitney asked Pierson to curate a show of his own works and works by Hopper (1882-1967), drawing on the Museum's extensive Hopper holdings. Through Sept. 11. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"Royal Tombs of Sipán." Gold, silver, and gilded copper objects of the Moche, a pre-Inca civilization of northern Peru. The 1987 discovery of a series of undisturbed royal tombs dating to the fourth century A.D. established the Moche as one of the world's major ancient civilizations. Precious metals steal the show, though the ceramics on display are very fine, and Moche portrait heads speak as eloquently as Roman busts. The curators are probably right to identify Sipán as the richest burial site ever excavated in the New World. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—Selected works of Leon Polk Smith, an American abstract painter. . . . ¶ From the museum's contemporary-art collection, an exhibit of paintings by Mark Rothko and Ad Reinhardt, and sculpture by Louise Nevelson, among others. . . . ¶ An exhibition of more than five hundred Egyptian objects from the museum's extensive collection, spanning thirteen hundred years of Pharaonic history. . . . ¶ From the museum's collection, samples of twentieth-century decorative arts and industrial design, including studio pottery and an Electrolux vacuum cleaner. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—"Bauhaus Workshops: 1919-1933." Furniture, metalwork, glass, textiles, and ceramics made by disciples of the German school of architecture and design. This small but instructive exhibit broadens the picture to include the role of women at the Bauhaus. Among the highlights are the innovative textile designs of Gunta Stölzl, Anni Albers, and others, which combine a rich craft aesthetic with the abstract concepts of the modernist utopia. Through Oct. 9. . . . ¶ "Sculptural Concerns: Contemporary American Metalworking." Jewelry, sculpture, and furniture, among other craftwork. Through Oct. 2. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Bard Graduate Center, 18 W. 86th St.—"Baroque Splendor: The Art of the Hungarian Goldsmith" includes gilt silver vessels, jewels, and armor from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, when Hungary was occupied by the Turks. (Tuesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8:30.)

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse—"Artist in the Marketplace XIV." Through Sept. 11. . . . ¶ "Xu Bing: Recent Work." Through Sept. 11. . . . ¶ "Building the Collection: Recent Acquisitions and Selected Works from the Permanent Collection." Through Sept. 11. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—"The Structure of Style: Modernism in Dutch Applied Arts 1880-1930." Opens Sept. 13. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Forbes Magazine Galleries, Fifth Ave. at 12th St.— "The Eleven Most Endangered Places and the Other Upper East Side: A Diverse Architectural Heritage." Opens Sept. 10. . . . ¶ "The Words of War: Documents of World War II from the *Forbes* Magazine Collection" commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of D Day. (Open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, 10 to 4.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—Sèvres porcelain, Limoges enamel, and paintings by Vermeer, Rembrandt, Whistler, and El Greco are all on view in this former residence of Henry Clay Frick (1849-1919). (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—" 'A Chief of Ideas': Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century" highlights his longtime love affairs with Mme. du Châtelet and his niece Mme. Denis. Opens Sept. 7. . . . ¶ " 'No Small Pleasure': Benjamin Franklin as Public Servant." Opens Sept. 7. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5; Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Sundays, noon to 7.)

Museo del Barrio, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—The second part of "Artists Talk Back: Visual Conversations with El Museo," is "Recovering Popular Culture." The show's four sections include a bodega exhibit, an exhibit pairing work from the permanent collection with work from contemporary artists, live demonstrations by weavers and instrument makers, and work from the traditional arts collection. Opens Sept. 9. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 5; Thursdays, noon to 7.)

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ART—Cont'd

Museum for African Art, 593 Broadway—"Western Artists/African Art." It's difficult to study the masks and statuary in this exhibit of African objects owned by Western artists without considering a number of issues, such as how artists are influenced by other cultures, and what it means to own work that was intended strictly for religious ceremonies. These pieces, owned by such artists as Francesco Clemente, Eric Fischl, and Lorna Simpson, have been photographed in their owners' homes and are shown with texts of their owners' thoughts. The sculptor Mel Edwards says, "Eye to eye, African art is like a deep conversation with family." The show, too, is a provocative discussion. . . . ¶ "Fusion: West African Artists at the Venice Biennale." Paintings, sculptures, and drawings by Mor Faye and Moustapha Dimé, of Senegal, and Tamessir Dia, Ouattara, and Gérard Santoni, of the Ivory Coast, all of whom were in the 1993 Venice Biennale. Particularly notable are Ouattara's mixed-medium paintings/reliefs, which combine elements of traditional tribal culture with aesthetic strategies of the avant-garde. Through Sept. 18. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5:30; Saturdays, noon to 8; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Museum of American Folk Art, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—"New York Beauties: Quilts from the Empire State." Twenty-two of the approximately six thousand quilts obtained through the museum's New York Quilt Project are on view. The most flamboyant is Elizabeth Hamilton's one-of-a-kind Teaching Quilt (1934). Animals, tools, fruits and vegetables, and the like, all in bright red, are stitched topsy-turvy on a white ground, with a boy and girl on a seesaw in the center and a border of letters and words. Elementary but pleasing. Through Sept. 11. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11:30 to 7:30.)

Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"Stickball Hall of Fame" includes a film of a stickball game, photographs from 1898 to the present, and jerseys. Through Sept. 25. . . . ¶ "Beals' Bohemians: Photographs by Jessie Tarbox Beals." Greenwich Village during the early nineteen-hundreds, as captured by America's first woman photojournalist. . . . ¶ "Pride=Power!" marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Stonewall rebellion, in which patrons of a gay bar resisted arrest and harassment, triggering a series of riots and demonstrations. The exhibit includes photographs of the New York City Gay and Lesbian Pride March, posters, pennants, T-shirts, and other artifacts. Through Sept. 18. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Glancing Backward: Edith Wharton's New York." Paintings, drawings, sculpture, and books that detail the literary career of Edith Wharton. . . . ¶ "The Artist's Eye: Wayne Thiebaud." The painter has selected more than fifty paintings from the Academy's collection. Fifteen of Thiebaud's own pictures are also on exhibit. Through Sept. 25. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5; Friday evenings until 8, with no admission charge after 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"The Raw and the Cooked: Images of Food from the Renaissance to the Present." Opens Sept. 10. . . . ¶ "Broken Rules and Double Crosses: Ken Campbell, an Artist's Books." . . . ¶ "Becoming Visible: The Legacy of Stonewall." Photos, posters, and related material place the Stonewall rebellion in the larger context of gay history. Through Sept. 24. . . . ¶ "New in the Berg Collection, 1991-1993." Manuscripts that the library acquired during this period include Nabokov's papers and several poems by Anne Sexton. Through Oct. 1. (Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6.)

New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center—"Revealing Roots: Uncovering Influences on the Contemporary American Puppet Theatre." Six stunning exhibits show how the puppetry traditions of Japan, Indonesia, Mexico, and Western Africa, among other places, have infused American puppet artistry with their mythos and technique. Through Sept. 30. (Open Mondays and Thursdays, noon to 8; Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, noon to 6.)

Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Rd., Long Island City—Works from every period of the Japanese-American sculptor's life (1904-88) are installed in a garden and open-air galleries carved from, and added to, an old photo-engraving factory. (Open Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Schomburg Center, 515 Lenox Ave., at 135th St.—"South Africa: The Cordoned Heart." Photo-essays on the working and living conditions of black South Africans. Through Sept. 11. . . . ¶ Photographs of Nelson Mandela's June, 1990, visit to New York City. Through Sept. 11. (Open Mondays through Wednesdays, noon to 8; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Socrates Sculpture Park, Broadway at Vernon Blvd., Long Island City—"Bongo Park '94" includes work by Gunilla Bandolin, Mark di Suvero, and Nancy Rubins. (Open daily, 10 to sunset.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—"Hale Woodruff Memorial Exhibition–Curators' Choice." The third in a series, in which the work of little-known African-American artists is selected for exhibition by curators from around the United States. . . . ¶ Minimalist bronze sculptures by Helen Evans Ramsaran. Through Oct. 2. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

SEASON OPENERS—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Walter Stuempfig (1914-70)—A retrospective exhibition of this Philadelphian loyalist to the realist cause in painting. Born a year after the Armory Show, Stuempfig maintained a lifelong disdain for the arts of modernism. (During a trip to Europe at age fifteen he remarked that there was "too much to see to bother with modern art.") Stuempfig's technique displays the felicities of solid academic training and traditional subject matter—landscapes, still-lifes, the artist's studio, and assorted genre scenes. Opens Sept. 8. Through Oct. 8. (York, 21 E. 65th St.)

"Wood Works"—When Adam Baumgold decided to open a gallery after ten years as a private dealer, he shied away from "hot and trendy" SoHo and set up stakes on the fourth floor of a brownstone on the Upper East Side. Overlooking a back garden, it has a quiet, intimate atmosphere that lends itself to contemplative viewing. Baumgold plans to show well-established artists alongside young emerging ones, to see what kind of bedfellows the different generations make. In this inaugural show, for example, Saul Steinberg's "Perspective Table" (1974), on which the artist's whittled pencils, palette, and sketchbook are laid, has an affinity with Brooklyn-based András Böröcz's "Lounging" and "Couple" (both from this year), skinny totemic sculptures topped with figures, all made of pencils. Other artists in the show include Louise Nevelson, Richard Artschwager, Anton van Dalen, Cletus Johnson, Walter Martin, and Claudia Fitch. Opens Sept. 13. Through Oct. 21. (Baumgold, 128 E. 72nd St.)

Alan Bray—Intimately scaled landscapes composed of meticulous hairline strokes of color. Opens Sept. 7. Through Oct. 8. (Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St.)

Francesco Clemente / Andrew Lord—"Purgatorio," a new series consisting of five paintings and four pastels. / Bronzes in the form of vessels. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 15. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

Al Held—Dark, heavily impastoed abstract paintings with linear elements, done in Paris in 1952. Opens Sept. 13. Through Oct. 8. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

David Hockney—Gouaches, in the artist's continuing exploration of perspective and the illusion of depth. Opens Sept. 8. Through Oct. 15. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

John Hull—Narrative paintings about the battle of the Alamo. Opens Sept. 8. Through Oct. 12. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Mark Mennin—Sculptural stone fragments depicting the sensory organs of humans, set in frames made by the artist. Opens Sept. 8. Through Oct. 15. (Del Re, 41 E. 57th St.)

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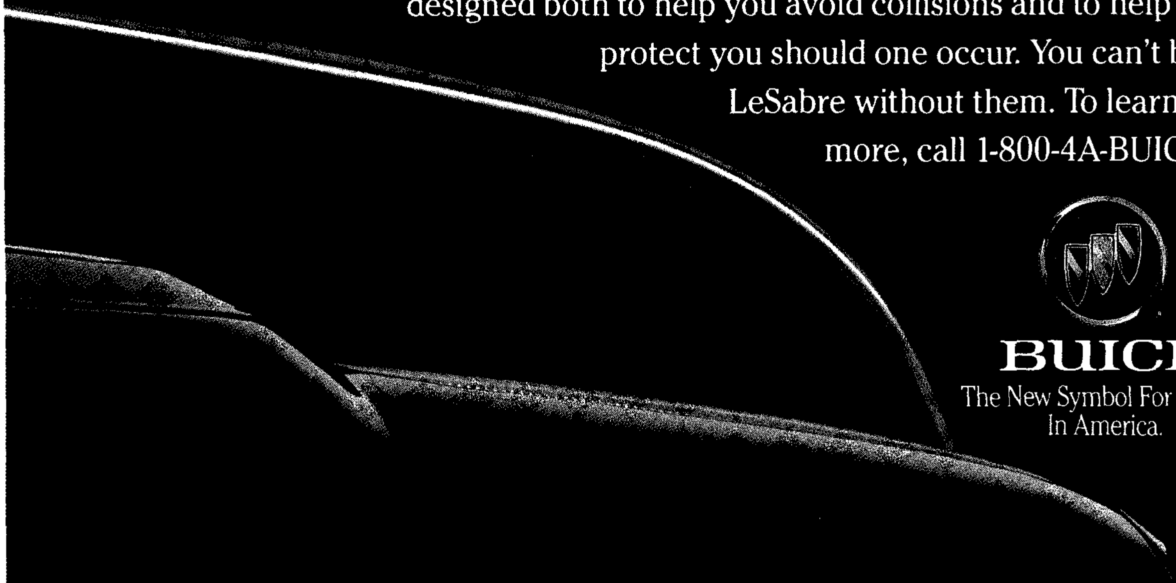

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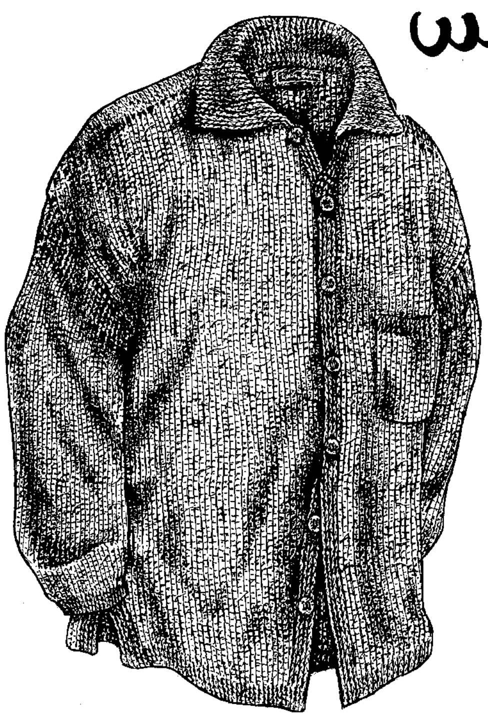

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ART–Cont'd

KATHERINE PALVIS PORTER / JEDD NOVATT—Large-scale paintings of the sky, stars, and labyrinths. / Welded and painted abstract sculptures. Opens Sept. 8. Through Oct. 1. (Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St.)

JEANNE SILVERTHORNE—A chandelier cast in rubber is the centerpiece in this show of malleable sculptures of commonplace objects. Opens Sept. 8. Through Oct. 1. (McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

JOSEPH STELLA (1877-1946)—"People on the Page," a selection from the artist's sketchbooks. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 8. (Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.) . . . **NOTE:** A retrospective of the artist's work is on view at the Whitney Museum.

"THE ART OF TAIWAN'S ABORIGINES"—Handicrafts made by the ten major aboriginal tribes of the island of Taiwan. Opens Sept. 9. Through Oct. 21. (Taipei, 1221 Sixth Ave., at 49th St. Open Mondays. Closed Saturdays.)

"THE BODY HUMAN"—Views of the figure, by an eclectic group of artists including Keith Haring and Tom Otterness. Opens Sept. 8. Through Oct. 15. (Haime, 41 E. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

"BY THEIR CHOICE?"—Works by four African-American artists who left the country during the fifties to live and paint in Europe. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 1. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

THREE WEIMAR ERA WOMEN—Art by Hannah Höch, Käthe Kollwitz, and Jeanne Mammen, in a show including loans from museums and private collections in this country and in Germany. Opens Sept. 12. Through Nov. 5. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St.)

SEASON OPENERS—DOWNTOWN

MIRIAM SCHAPIRO—Paintings incorporating pieces of fabric from the artist's "Collaboration Series 1994: Mother Russia." In this show, Schapiro's "collaborators" are such women of the early Soviet avant-garde as Varvara Stepanova, Lyubov Popova, and Natalya Goncharova. Schapiro is one of the original pattern-and-decoration artists of the seventies, and she remains true to the luxuriant craft aesthetic and implicitly feminist consciousness of that movement. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 15. (Steinbaum Krauss, 132 Greene St.)

SANDY SKOGLUND—Two years ago, at Borden, this enfant terrible showed three installations using mannequins and related photographs of real people, as well as smoked bacon strips, Cheez Doodles, and raisins: this magazine called them "scenes of funny horror." In her new piece, "The Wedding," the floor and walls are covered with strawberry jam and orange marmalade, a multitude of ceramic roses are scattered everywhere, and two motorized mannequins play the bride and groom. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 29. (Borden, 560 Broadway.)

MATTHEW ABBOTT—Brightly colored paintings, each of which incorporates a nearly illegible crossword puzzle from the London *Times*. The paintings' titles are answers found in the puzzles. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 12. (Fawbush, 76 Grand St.)

DOUG AITKEN—An installation of digitally created photographic images, a sound piece, and two videos, in which the artist has juxtaposed media images with personal narrative elements. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 15. (303 Gallery, 89 Greene St.)

KELYNN ALDER—Paintings and sketches of the Lacandones of Naja—an indigenous people of Southern Mexico who uphold the ancient customs of the Maya religion—plus five mythological sculptures. Opens Sept. 7. Through Oct. 13. (A, 98 Greene St.) . . . **NOTE:** A complementary exhibition of pastels, watercolors, and crafts by Lacandon children is at the Children's Museum of the Arts, 72 Spring St. Opens Sept. 8. Through Feb. 28.

PETER BROWN / GOVERT HEIKOOP—Sculptures by two artists working with laminated and colored wood in simple biomorphic shapes. Opens Sept. 8. Through Oct. 1. (M-13, at 72 Greene St.)

HOWARD BUCHWALD—Richly textured paintings dating from 1989, when the artist ceased cutting into the canvas, to the present. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 5. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

ADAM CVIJANOVIC—Two monumental paintings focussing on the importance of the hand in production: the first depicts Russian workers in a sweatshop where shearling coats are made, and the second portrays Chuck Close, who was partially handicapped several years ago, surrounded by assistants and dealers in his studio. Opens Sept. 7. Through Oct. 15. (Anderson, 476 Broome St.)

ALFRED DECREDICO / PAOLA FONTICOLI—Abstract drawings. / Black-and-white works on paper, evocative of nature. Opens Sept. 8. Through Oct. 1. (Condeso/Lawler, 524 Broadway.)

HELMUT DORNER—Single- and multi-panel paintings built up with layers of lacquer. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 8. (Brooke Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

ERIC FISCHL—A series of five paintings of scenes involving a nude woman. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 22. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

DALE FRANK—Brightly colored abstractions composed of fluid loops of paint. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 1. (Shainman, 560 Broadway.)

NANCY GROSSMAN—"Fire Fields," a series of abstract collage drawings based on the artist's recent observation of the active volcanoes in Hawaii. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 15. (Ledisflam, 130 Prince St.)

LAUREL KATZ—A mixed-medium project that proposes bypassing the shearing of sheep by growing sweaters directly on the animals. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 8. (Postmasters, 80 Greene St.)

HARRIET KORMAN—Luminous abstract paintings. Opens Sept. 8. Through Oct. 8. (Lennon, Weinberg, 580 Broadway.)

ELAINE MARINOFF—Thickly textured, dark abstract paintings based on the artist's research at oil-spill sites, and drawings based on her response to the California fires last October. Opens Sept. 12. Through Oct. 1. (Zarre, 48 Greene St.)

SARAH PLIMPTON—Abstract paintings by a poet. Opens Sept. 8. Through Oct. 4. (Kelly, 591 Broadway.)

DAVID ROBBINS—A show of sculptures and photographs in a series called "Situation Comedies." Opens Sept. 9. Through Oct. 15. (Feature, 76 Greene St.)

EDVINS STRAUTMANIS (1933-92)—Paintings from the last decade of this American abstractionist's career. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 16. (Stephen Rosenberg, 115 Wooster St.)

FRANZ WEST—An installation titled "Home Elements (A Retrospective)," which includes sculpture, furniture, and works on paper and invites viewer interaction. Opens Sept. 11. Through Oct. 22. (Zwirner, 43 Greene St.)

BRENDA ZIAMANY—Twelve portraits of male artists and twelve still-lifes of dead birds. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 15. (Donahue, 560 Broadway.)

"FAMILY TIES"—Sculptures by six artists exploring issues of family and home. Opens Sept. 9. Through Oct. 8. (P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway.)

"SELECTIONS FALL '94: INSTALLATIONS"—Four emerging artists explore ways in which the drawing medium can function in an installation format. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 22. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. Open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

"SYMBOLIC SURFACE"—David Geiser, Diane Green, Robert Kuszek, and six other painters. Opens Sept. 7. Through Oct. 7. (Klarfeld Perry, 472 Broome St.)

"WHERE IS HOME?"—The gallery has assembled a group of works on the theme of homeland, community, and family, by, among others, John Baldessari, Annette Lemieux, and Joel Sternfeld. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 22. (Kent, 67 Prince St. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

The Enthusiast

THE work of a long and varied life is on view for two more weeks in "Lotte Jacobi: Old and New Worlds," at the midtown branch of the International Center of Photography through September 18. Jacobi (1896-1990) began her career in Berlin in the late twenties, as a portraitist of poets, singers, actors, and dancers. She spent the last decades of her life in New Hampshire, continuing to photograph people she admired—Robert Frost, May Sarton, and Edward Steichen, among others. On the evidence of this exhibition, Jacobi wasn't a visionary artist. Rather, she was an enthusiast who recorded the spirit and creativity of the century. It is impossible to know the true extent of her achievement; she had to abandon her studio when she fled Germany in 1935, and much of her work was lost or destroyed in the war.

Even without being remarkably innovative, she left a body of work that is memorable not only for what—and whom—it captured, but for the way the portraits reveal the essence of their subjects. "My style is the style of the people I photograph," she once said. Magazines and newspapers counted on her for this openness, and her subjects came to trust her, too. When *Life* wanted to do a story on Albert Einstein, the physicist asked that she be the photographer, and no wonder. Her shots, from the twenties, of Einstein on his sailboat in Germany have an air of naturalness and intimacy; so do the portraits she took many years later in his office at Princeton University. He seems completely at home. But perhaps it is Jacobi's self-portrait, taken when she was in her mid-thirties, that most clearly shows her passion for the medium that occupied her attention for over sixty years. She is rushing, as it were, into the picture frame, her hair flying a bit and her eyes alight.

BILL BRANDT—A retrospective of the British photographer's work, including his early studies of English society and his later abstract female nudes. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 29. (Houk Friedman, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

REGINA DE LUISE—Rich exotic landscapes and nudes. Opens Sept. 9. Through Oct. 15. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St.)

MAXWELL MACKENZIE—Panoramic, vividly colored landscapes of Otter Tail County, in northwest Minnesota. Opens Sept. 10. Through Oct. 8. (Saul, 560 Broadway.)

PATRICK NAGATANI—Color photographs of "constructed" environments. Open Sept. 10. Through Oct. 15. (Baum, 588 Broadway.)

RAGHUBIR SINGH—More than sixty photographs of Bombay and the Ganges river. Through Oct. 21. (Borden, 20 E. 23rd St.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY MIDTOWN, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St.—Photographs by Lotte Jacobi. Through Sept. 16. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the New York Public Library, and the Schomburg Center.)

IN BRITAIN, there is a tradition of modesty at the very top.

Thus, a tremor ran round at Macallan when it was suggested that *a pictorial representation* of their malt whisky bottle should appear in an advertisement.

It smacked too much of the **'hard sell'.**

Their Publicity Advisers, however, assured them that there is occasionally a need for this sort of thing.

So, with some misgiving, they have consented to a small scraperboard reproduction being displayed.

The MACALLAN
The MACALLAN
Single Highland Malt
Scotch Whisky
12
BOTTLED IN SCOTLAND

"One sip is worth one thousand pictures."

THE MACALLAN. THE SINGLE MALT SCOTCH.

Sole U.S.A. Distributor, Remy Amerique, Inc., NY, NY Scotch Whisky 86 Proof, 43% Alc./Vol. © 1994

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Ludwig van, Piano Man

"BACH is the foundation of piano playing, Liszt the summit. The two make Beethoven possible." So wrote Ferruccio Busoni, who, as one of the most exalted pianists of the post-Lisztian golden age, made pronouncements with considerable authority.

Beethoven probably would have agreed about the Bach part. The "Well-Tempered Clavier" had been a keystone of his early education, teaching the fundamental patterns of pianism in every key, the independence of fingers in articulating polyphonic voices, and an appreciation of how small details relate to large structures. Beethoven's piano sonatas stretched these aspects nearly to their limits: think, respectively, of the bustling harmonic adventure of Op. 54, the crazed fugue of the "Hammerklavier," the subtle logic of the "Appassionata." Whether Beethoven's demands overstepped the capabilities of contemporaneous instruments (as has often been alleged) is debatable. Listeners can judge for themselves when Malcolm Bilson and an international coterie of his protégés perform all thirty-two sonatas on replicas of Beethoven-era instruments, in a series of eight recitals at Merkin Concert Hall, beginning on September 11.

Who knows what Beethoven would have thought of Liszt's later, unprecedented virtuosity? In a sense, though, Liszt did "make Beethoven possible" for nineteenth-century music lovers, thanks to his piano transcriptions of the nine symphonies (the orchestral originals being rarely accessible to listeners in the era before recordings and radio). Although their practical value was largely obsolesced by the electronic age, Liszt's transcriptions are so masterful that occasional airings can still prove rewarding—as they may when all nine of Liszt's Beethoven symphony transcriptions are performed during the September 10-11 Beethoven Festival at Long Island's Planting Fields Arboretum.

OPERA

New York City Opera—Opening performances of the season, which this year will comprise a fall segment (through Nov. 20) and a spring segment (March 3-April 23). **MADAMA BUTTERFLY,** with Maryanne Telese, Ellen Rabiner, Stephen Mark Brown, and Robert Perry; conducted by Guido Ajmone-Marsan. (Sept. 8 at 8 and Sept. 11 at 1:30.) . . . **THE MAGIC FLUTE,** sung in English, with Amy Burton, Mary Dunleavy, Benjamin Butterfield, Jeff Mattsey, and James Patterson; Scott Bergeson. (Sept. 9 at 8.) . . . **CARMEN,** with Robynne Redmon, Patricia Johnson, Allan Glassman, and Mark Delavan; Semyon Vekshtein. (Sept. 10 at 1:30 and Sept. 13 at 8.) . . . A new production of Borodin's **PRINCE IGOR,** with Oksana Krovytska, Valery Alexeyev, and Vladimir Grishko; Mr. Ajmone-Marsan. (Sept. 10 at 8.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. English supertitles at all non-English-language performances.)

Amato Opera Company—Opening performances of a new production of "La Bohème." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Sept. 10 at 7:30 and Sept. 11 at 2:30.)

ORCHESTRAS

City Island Baroque Ensemble—Trumpeter Alex Holton is featured in concertos by Leopold Mozart and Haydn. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 1-718 885-2478. Sept. 11 at 11:30 A.M.)

Jupiter Symphony—Jens Nygaard conducts Handel's Concerto Grosso in G Minor (Op. 6, No. 6), Haydn's Symphony No. 23, and Mozart's Piano Concerto in B-Flat Major (K. 456, featuring Claude Frank). (Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, 152 W. 66th St. Sept. 12 at 2 and 7 and Sept. 13 at 8. For information about tickets, call 799-1259.)

RECITALS

Taiwanese Composers Retrospective—A survey of the past fifty years of composition in Taiwan. Concerts will include music by twenty composers, performed by Chinese and Western musicians. Sept. 7 at 3: A composers' round-table discussion. . . . ¶ Sept. 9 at 7:30: A concert of vocal music. . . . ¶ Sept. 10 at 7:30 and Sept. 11 at 2: Two separate programs of instrumental chamber works. (Taipei Theatre, 1221 Sixth Ave., at 48th St. 373-1850.)

Lunchtime Downtown—Sept. 8 at noon: Tenor Robert White performs songs composed by New Yorkers, both the born-and-bred variety (like Copland and Corigliano) and non-natives who ended up here (including Stephen Foster, Irving Berlin, and Victor Herbert); with pianist Brandt Fredriksen. . . . ¶ Sept. 12 at noon: Cellist Marina Hoover (of the St. Lawrence String Quartet) and pianist Melvin Chen perform sonatas by Beethoven (in A Major) and Poulenc. (St. Paul's Chapel, Broadway at Fulton St. Admission by contribution.)

Bargemusic—Violinist Akiko Suwanai, who was awarded the gold medal of the 1990 Tchaikovsky International Competition, performs Ysaÿe's Unaccompanied Sonata No. 3 ("Ballade"); Randall Hodgkinson and cellist Fred Sherry join her for Beethoven's G-Major Piano Trio (Op. 1, No. 2) and the composer's own trio arrangement of his Symphony No. 2. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. Sept. 8 at 7:30 and Sept. 11 at 4.)

LISTENING BOOTH

Love's Illusion: Music from the Montpellier Codex; Anonymous 4 (Harmonia Mundi). The distaff vocal quartet offers a tantalizing glimpse of thirteenth-century France, a time and place as distant from our own as the Beauvais Cathedral is from Trump Tower, or the "Roman de la Rose" from "Listening to Prozac." The two, three, or four polyphonic vocal lines of these twenty-nine motets simultaneously render separate texts relating to the strictly codified themes of courtly love. Anonymous 4, whose security of ensemble grows tighter with each passing year, invests in these two-minute-long medieval miniatures the same respect and polish that a fine string quartet lends to, say, Beethoven. A lulling sameness of timbre pervades the hour; but listen carefully, and a tapestry of musical variety will emerge, ranging from startling harmonic juxtapositions to the gentle alternation of voices, from early two-part songs to fin-de-siècle pieces eager to break into the larger-scale forms of the ensuing century. To journey still deeper into the secular Middle Ages, listeners should sample **LE FOU SUR LE PONT** (Camerata Mediterranea, directed by Joel Cohen; Erato), an evocative portrait, in songs and readings, of the twelfth-century troubadour Bernatz de Ventadorn, imaginatively programmed and performed in captivating vocal and instrumental realizations.

Galatea Ensemble—Members of the chamber group perform Steve Reich's "Clapping Music," William Grant Still's "Panama Dances," Villa-Lobos's "Bachianas Brasileiras No. 6," and Bach's Second "Brandenburg" Concerto. (St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 346 W. 20th St. Sept. 11 at 4. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

The Thirty-Two Big Ones—Pianist Malcolm Bilson and six of his historically informed protégés will perform all of Beethoven's piano sonatas on period instruments (or replicas thereof). Sept. 11 at 4: The Sonatas in F Major (Op. 2, No. 1, with Mr. Bilson), A Major (Op. 2, No. 2, with Tom Beghin), G Major (Op. 49, No. 1, with Zvi Meniker), and C Major (Op. 2, No. 3, with David Breitman). . . . ¶ Sept. 11 at 8: The Sonatas in B-Flat Major (Op. 22, with Mr. Meniker), C-Sharp Minor (Op. 27, No. 2, the "Moonlight," with Mr. Bilson), E-Flat Major (Op. 27, No. 1, with Ursula Duetschler), and D Major (Op. 28, the "Pastorale," with Mr. Breitman). . . . ¶ Sept. 12 at 6:45: A lecture by Mr. Bilson. . . . ¶ Sept. 12 at 8: The Sonatas in F Major (Op. 54, with Andrew Willis), C Major (Op. 53, the "Waldstein," with Bart van Oort), G Major (Op. 79, with Mr. Beghin), F-Sharp Minor (Op. 78, with Mr. Breitman), and F Minor (Op. 57, the "Appassionata," with Mr. Meniker). . . . ¶ Sept. 13 at 6:45: A lecture by musicologist Neal Zaslaw. . . . ¶ Sept. 13 at 8: The Sonatas in E Minor (Op. 90, with Mr. Beghin), A Major (Op. 101, with Mr. Bilson), and B-Flat Major (Op. 106, the "Hammerklavier," with Mr. Willis). (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. The cycle will conclude with concerts on Sept. 22 and Sept. 24-25.)

Yuri Kim—Pianist, performing ballades and études by Chopin. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. Sept. 11 at 6 and 8. Admission is free, but call 876-6000 to reserve a seat.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—Sept. 11, 1969, marked a double-threat evening in New York's musical life: the inaugural concert of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, which also happened to be the first concert in the spanking new Alice Tully Hall. Twenty-five years and a day later, members of the ensemble, plus several guests, perform a concert of works drawn from the society's first week of programming, namely Bach's C-Major Trio Sonata, Beethoven's Quintet for Piano and Winds, selections from Schumann's "Dichterliebe" (here featuring baritone Christópheren Nomura), and Tchaikovksy's String Sextet "Souvenir de Florence." (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Sept. 12 at 7:30.)

OUT OF TOWN

Beethoven Bash—*A final festival fling for the* weekend-exodus crowd, just as the in-town season takes its first steps. The concert sites are on an elegant estate well known to the horticulturally inclined, and the programs are all-Beethoven, including songs, instrumental solo and chamber works, and a sequential performance of all nine of his symphonies, as transcribed by Liszt for the piano. Sept. 10, from noon to 5:30, in the estate's barn: The Beethoven-Liszt Symphonies No. 1 (performed by pianist Şahan Arzruni), No. 2 (with Jon Klibonoff), No. 3 (with Peter Basquin), No. 4 (with Peter Vinograde), and No. 5 (with Jeffrey Biegel). . . . From 11:45 to 5, in the estate's mansion: The String Quartets in G Major (Op. 18, No. 2), F Major (Op. 59, No. 1), and F Minor (Op. 95), all with the Laurentian String Quartet; two piano sonatas in C Minor (Op. 13, the "Pathétique," with Mr. Biegel, and Op. 111, with Mr. Vinograde), and the "Gellert Lieder" (with baritone Robert Osborne and pianist Alan Moverman). . . . At 8, in a music tent: Roger Norrington conducts the Orchestra of St. Luke's in Beethoven's "Coriolanus" Overture, Piano Concerto No. 4 (with Awadagin Pratt), and Symphony No. 7. . . . ¶ Sept. 11, from 11:45 to 4, in the mansion: Chamber music with violinist Maria Bachmann, cellist Semyon Fridman, and Mr. Klibonoff. . . . From noon to 3:45, in the barn: The Beethoven-Liszt Symphonies No. 6 (with Steven Mayer), No. 7 (with Jonathan Irving), and No. 8 (with David Oei), as well as songs (with Messrs. Osborne and Moverman). . . . From 2:30 to 4:15, in the tent: A sing-along rehearsal and performance of the "Hallelujah" from "Christ on the Mount of Olives.". . . From about 4:30 to 6, in the tent: The Beethoven-Liszt Symphony No. 9 (with duo-pianists David Bradshaw and Cosmo Buono). (Planting Fields Arboretum, Oyster Bay, Long Island. Note that concerts unroll simultaneously in various locations. For schedule details and information about tickets, call 1-516 922-0061.)

SPORTS

FOOTBALL

Giants—Away until Sept. 18, when they'll face the Washington Redskins.

Jets—Vs. the Denver Broncos, Sept. 11 at 4.

TENNIS

U.S. Open—The final week of the American installment of the Grand Slam. (U.S.T.A. National Tennis Center, Flushing Meadow, Queens. 1-718 271-5100. Through Sept. 11.)

POLO

U.S. Polo Championship—The hoof-pounding continues, on Sept. 10-11 at 3. (Bethpage State Park Polo Grounds, Long Island. For tickets, call 307-7171. Through Sept. 25.)

STICKBALL

Strike Buster—So what if the baseball strike is still on? The finalists in the five-borough stickball series will play some of the '69 Mets on Sept. 10 at a place undetermined at press time. For more information, call 210-6361.

(The Giants and the Jets play at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands, 1-201 935-8111. In the past, the Yankees played at Yankee Stadium, 1-718 293-6000, and the Mets at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499.)

FOR KIDS

(A list of activities for children and their parents or other adults.)

Sesame Street Live—A new stage show, "Let's Be Friends," features the neighborhood regulars, including Zoe, Elmo, Big Bird, and Snuffy. (Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 794-9300. Sept. 7-8 at 7; Sept. 9 at 10:30 and 7; Sept. 10 at 10:30, 2, and 5:30; and Sept. 11 at 1 and 4:30.)

"Children's Harvest Celebration"—A daylong affair centering on the New York Botanical Garden's Ruth Rea Howell Family Garden. Expect scavenger hunts, face painting, storytelling, pickle making, dried-gourd decorating—you name it. A Caribbean band will provide musical accompaniment to the goings on. (New York Botanical Garden, Bronx Park. 1-718 817-8700. Sept. 10, from 11 to 4.)

International Festival of Puppet Theatre—Kids' events at the big puppet convocation. Sept. 10 at 11, 2, and 5, and Sept. 11 at 1 and 3: Hobey Ford's Golden Rod Puppets in "Turtle Island Tales," based on Native American stories. Recommended ages: six and older. . . . ¶ Sept. 10 at 11 and 2, and Sept. 11 at noon and 2: Penny Jones & Company present "Peppi and the Pop-Up Dragon." Recommended ages: three to ten. (Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Tiny Tables—Make doll-house furniture from a variety of found objects, in a workshop at the Museum of the City of New York. For ages six to twelve. (Fifth Ave. at 103rd St. 534-1672, ext. 206. Sept. 10 at 2.)

RICHARD SANDLER

ABOVE AND BEYOND

How Does Your Garden Grow?—Bryant Park, that thriving model of innovative urban renovation, is more than a haven for the midtown lunch crowd. It also boasts two lovely beds of plantings designed by Lynden Miller, and a stout-hearted horticulturalist named Michael Levine, who tends what he calls "the most public public border in the world" and leads a tour of the garden every Wednesday evening at 6. One bed is near the sunny northern edge of the lawn, and the other, designed for shade, runs along the southern edge. This garden evangelist says, "I don't have to do much to be entertaining. I'm kind of like an interface: people who are estranged from the natural world get to touch and smell plants and flowers." The tour meets at the Josephine Shaw Lowell fountain on the west side of the park. . . . ¶ In the shadow of the New York Public Library, atop the underground stacks, Bryant Park will be alive with the sound of prose and poetry. Sept. 12 at 1: Toni Morrison will read from her fiction. . . . ¶ Sept. 13 at 1: Sekou Sundiata will read from his poetry. (Sixth Ave. at 42nd St. No tickets necessary.)

Michael Levine leads garden tours of Bryant Park.

Reinventing the Wheel—Subway got you down? Buses too slow? Cabs too fast? The annual Human Propulsion Fair may help you find the best way to commute. It's an ecologist's dream, with ways of using wheels that Mother Nature would love. (Union Square Park. Sept. 11, from noon to 6. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ A hundred-mile bicycle tour of New York City, sponsored by Transportation Alternatives, begins at 6:30 A.M., and finishes at the fair. For more information, call 475-4600.

Your Ship's Come In—Rock the Intrepid, at the aircraft carrier/museum's annual fall benefit ball. (46th St. at the Hudson River. Sept. 10, from 9 P.M. to 3 A.M. For more information, call 340-1070.)

Cathedral Caravan—The Mettawee River Theatre Company will present "The Caravan of Dreams," which is based on a tale from the Arabian Nights. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Sept. 9-11 at 7:30. Admission by contribution.)

Mahrajan Al-Fan—The Brooklyn Museum will host a day of Arab culture. Musicians, singers, dancers, poets, artists, and storytellers will entertain on Sept. 11, from noon to 5. (Eastern Parkway. 1-718 852-3298.)

Go Gaelic—The Great Irish Fair will feature the Wolfe Tones, Boru, and other live performances, along with a tribute to Bing Crosby. (Steeplechase Park, Coney Island. Sept. 10-11, from 10 to 7. For more information, call 1-718 891-6622.)

The Green Bard—A tour of the Shakespeare garden and the herb gardens at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, on Sept. 11 at 1, followed, at 2:30, by the Rosewood Chamber Ensemble performing works by Bach, Schubert, and Handel. (Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave., near Grand Army Plaza. No tickets necessary.)

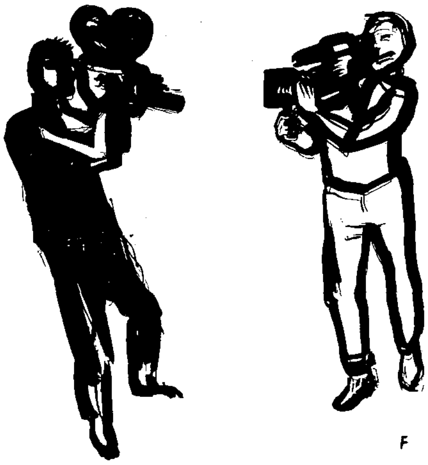
Wooden Boat Festival—Handmade kayaks, canoes, and runabouts will be on display at the South Street Seaport, for the New York Wooden Boat Festival. (Pier 16, East River at Fulton St. Sept. 9-11, from 10 to 7. No tickets necessary.)

Home Again—The Lower East Side Tenement Museum opens the doors of its historic tenement house, at 97 Orchard St., on Sept. 9. A guided tour, which includes a look at two restored and furnished apartments, will give participants an idea of the lives of two of the familes who lived there: the Gumpertzes, who emigrated from Germany in the eighteen-sixties, and the Baldizzis, who emigrated illegally from Italy just before the Depression. (Tuesdays through Fridays at 1, 2, and 3, and Sundays, every forty-five minutes, from 11 to 5:45. Tickets available at the museum, 90 Orchard St., on the days of the tours.)

Speak, Angela—Sept. 9 at 8: The activist and scholar Angela Davis will deliver the keynote address at a conference on issues confronting black intellectuals and activists, presented by Columbia University's Institute for Research in African-American Studies. (Dempsey Center Auditorium, 127 W. 127th St. For more information, call 854-7080.)

Readings—Sept. 7 at 7:30: Bharati Mukherjee will read from her new novel, "The Holder of the World." (Posman Books, 1 University Pl. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Sept. 12 at 6: Pete Hamill, author of "A Drinking Life," will read from his own work. (Glucksman Ireland House, New York University, 1 Washington Mews. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Sept. 12 at 8: Wayne Koestenbaum will read from his newest collection of poetry, "Rhapsodies of a Repeat Offender." (A Different Light, 151 W. 19th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Sept. 13 at 7: Harry Mathews and Joe Olshan will read from their own work. (Limbo, 47 Avenue A, at 4th St. No tickets necessary.)

Walks & Tours—Sept. 10 at 1: The Brooklyn Historical Society will take in the Green-Wood Cemetery, home to Boss Tweed and Lola Montez, among others. For more information, call 1-718 624-0890. . . . ¶ Island hopping with Big Onion Walking Tours. Governors Island (Sept. 10 at 1) and Ellis Island (Sept. 11 at 11). For more information, call 439-1090.



THE MOVIES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			7	8	9	10
11	12	13				

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN "MOVIES IN BRIEF," STARTING ON PAGE 34.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "The Advocate" (directed by Leslie Megahey), with Colin Firth, Ian Holm, Lysett Anthony, Donald Pleasence, and Nicol Williamson.
Theatre 2: "Café au Lait" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Sept. 8: "Mi Vida Loca" ("My Crazy Life"; Allison Anders). From Sept. 9: "What Happened Was . . ." (Tom Noonan), with Karen Sillas and Noonan.
Theatre 4: "Barcelona" (†).
Theatre 5: "Killing Zoe" (†).
Theatre 6: "Eat Drink Man Woman" (†).

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
Through Sept. 8: A program of films from China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong.
From Sept. 9: A program of short films by young African-American filmmakers.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "True Lies" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Client" (†).
Theatre 3: "It Could Happen to You" (†).

Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: "Natural Born Killers" (†).
Theatre 2: "Clear and Present Danger" (†).
Theatre 3: "Forrest Gump" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert" (†).
Theatre 6: "Natural Born Killers" (†).
Theatre 7: "Fresh" (†).

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
"Paul Bowles: The Complete Outsider" (Regina Weinreich and Catherine Warnow), a documentary.

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "A Simple Twist of Fate" (Gillies MacKinnon), with Steve Martin, Gabriel Byrne, and Catherine O'Hara.
Theatre 2: "À la Mode" (Rémy Duchemin, in French).
Theatre 3: Through Sept. 8: "Camp Nowhere" (Jonathan Prince), with Christopher Lloyd; and "White" (Krzysztof Kieślowski; in Polish and French). From Sept. 9: "A Good Man in Africa" (Bruce Beresford), with Colin Friels, Sean Connery, John Lithgow, Diana Rigg, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Joanne Whalley-Kilmer.
Theatre 4: "Corrina, Corrina" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Lion King" (†).
Theatre 6: "Color of Night" (†).
Theatre 7: "The Mask" (†).

19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 8: "The Client" (†). From Sept. 9: "Trial by Jury" (Heywood Gould), with Joanne Whalley-Kilmer, Armand Assante, Gabriel Byrne, and William Hurt.
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 8: "Milk Money" (Richard Benjamin), with Melanie Griffith and Ed Harris. From Sept. 9: "A Good Man in Africa" (Bruce Beresford), with Colin Friels, Sean Connery, John Lithgow, Diana Rigg, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Joanne Whalley-Kilmer.
Theatre 3: "Corrina, Corrina" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Mask" (†).
Theatre 5: "A Simple Twist of Fate" (Gillies MacKinnon), with Steve Martin and Gabriel Byrne.
Theatre 6: "The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert" (†).

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: "The Client" (†).
Theatre 2: "Natural Born Killers" (†).
Theatre 3: "Color of Night" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Mask" (†).

34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Forrest Gump" (†).
Theatre 2: "Clear and Present Danger" (†).
Theatre 3: "True Lies" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Milk Money" (Richard Benjamin), with Melanie Griffith and Ed Harris.

Eastside Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Barcelona" (†).

Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "The Lion King" (†).
Theatre 2: "Color of Night" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"A Simple Twist of Fate" (Gillies MacKinnon), with Steve Martin and Gabriel Byrne.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Spanking the Monkey" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "True Lies" (†).
Theatre 2: "Jurassic Park" (Steven Spielberg), with Sam Neill, Laura Dern, Jeff Goldblum, and Richard Attenborough.

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Four Weddings and a Funeral" (Mike Newell), with Hugh Grant, Andie MacDowell, John Hannah, Simon Callow, Kristin Scott Thomas, and James Fleet.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Forrest Gump" (†).
Theatre 2: "Forrest Gump" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Corrina, Corrina" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 8: "The Mask" (†). From Sept. 9: "A Good Man in Africa" (Bruce Beresford), with Colin Friels, Sean Connery, John Lithgow, Diana Rigg, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Joanne Whalley-Kilmer.
Theatre 3: "Camp Nowhere" (Jonathan Prince), with Christopher Lloyd.

First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)
Theatre 1: "Eat Drink Man Woman" (†).
Theatre 2: "Speed" (Jan De Bont), with Keanu Reeves, Dennis Hopper, and Sandra Bullock.
Theatre 3: "The Little Rascals" (Penelope Spheeris).
Theatre 4: "Milk Money" (Richard Benjamin), with Melanie Griffith and Ed Harris.
Theatre 5: "Fresh" (†).
Theatre 6: "Andre" (George Miller), with Keith Carradine and Tina Majorino; and "Fresh" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "It Could Happen to You" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 8: "Wagons East" (Peter Markle), with John Candy and Richard Lewis. From Sept. 9: "Trial by Jury" (Heywood Gould), with Joanne Whalley-Kilmer, Armand Assante, Gabriel Byrne, and William Hurt.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Natural Born Killers" (†).

New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 8: "The Client" (†). From Sept. 9: "Rapa Nui" (Kevin Reynolds), with Jason Scott Lee, Esai Morales, and Sandrine Holt.
Theatre 2: "Clear and Present Danger" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Advocate" (Leslie Megahey), with Colin Firth, Ian Holm, Lysett Anthony, Donald Pleasence, and Nicol Williamson.

Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert" (†).

East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Clear and Present Danger" (†).

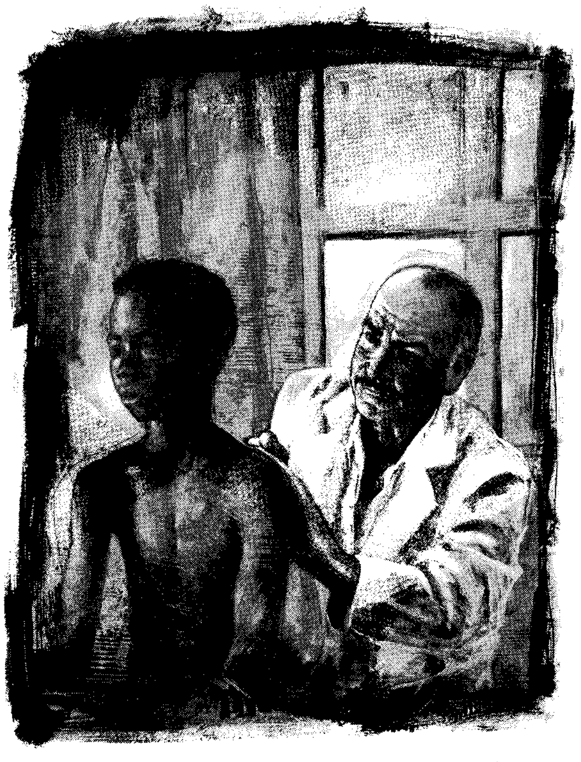
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "True Lies" (†).
Theatre 2: "Corrina, Corrina" (†).

Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)
Theatre 1: "The Mask" (†).
Theatre 2: "Forrest Gump" (†).
Theatre 3: "Color of Night" (†).
Theatre 4: "Natural Born Killers" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Lion King" (†).
Theatre 6: Through Sept. 8: "Milk Money" (Richard Benjamin), with Melanie Griffith and Ed Harris. From Sept. 9: "A Good Man in Africa" (Bruce Beresford), with Colin Friels, Sean Connery, John Lithgow, Diana Rigg, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Joanne Whalley-Kilmer.
Theatre 7: Through Sept. 8: "Blankman" (Mike Binder), with Damon Wayans, David Alan Grier, Robin Givens, Jon Polito, and Jason Alexander. From Sept. 9: "Trial by Jury" (Heywood Gould), with Joanne Whalley-Kilmer, Armand Assante, Gabriel Byrne, and William Hurt.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "A Simple Twist of Fate" (Gillies MacKinnon), with Steve Martin, Gabriel Byrne, and Catherine O'Hara.
Theatre 2: "Fresh" (†).

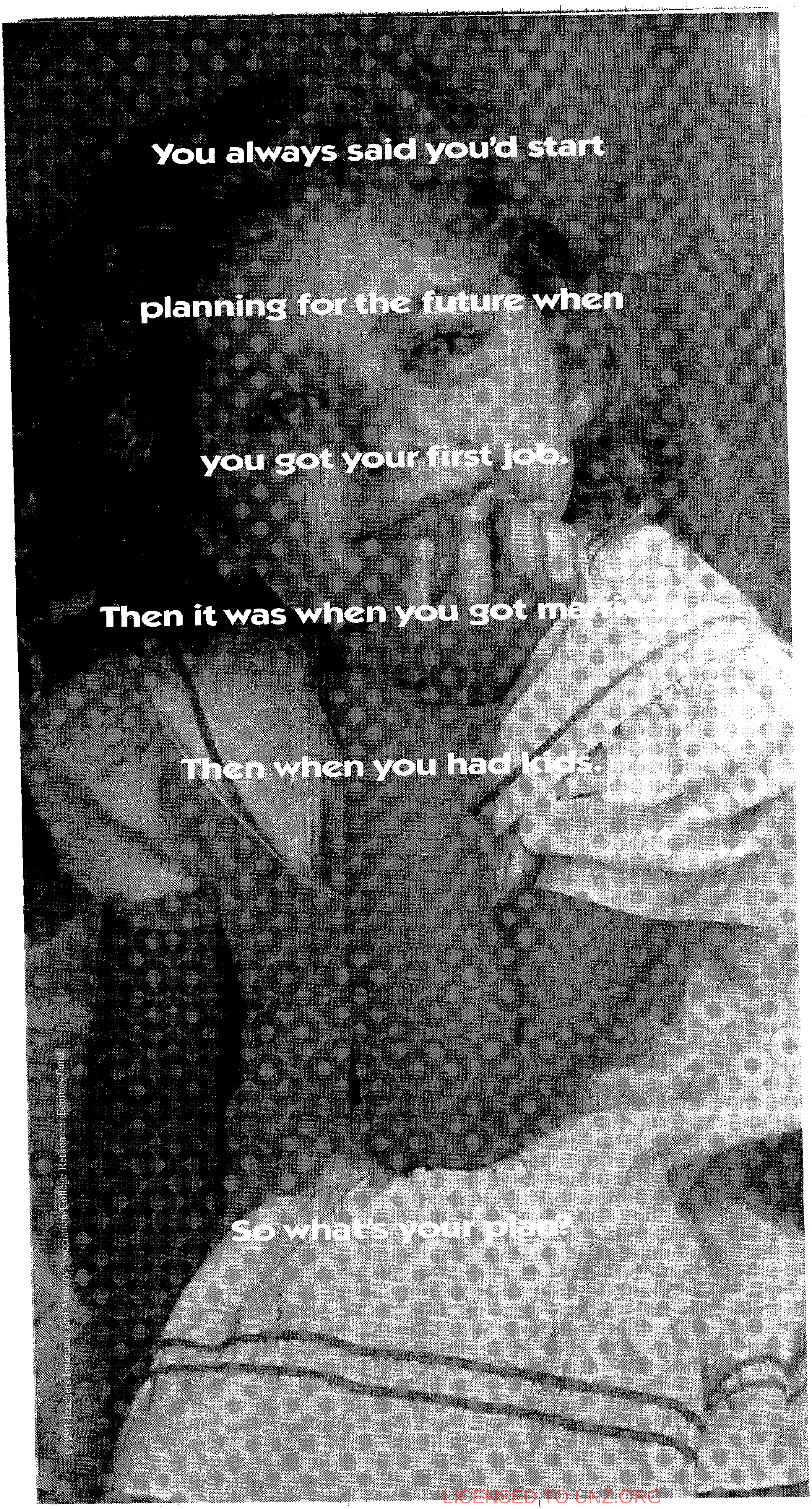
WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: "Only the Brave" (directed by Sonia Herman Dolz; in Spanish), a documentary about bullfighting.



Opening September 9, Sean Connery in "A Good Man in Africa."

TIM BOWER


You always said you'd start
planning for the future when
you got your first job.
Then it was when you got married.
Then when you had kids.
So what's your plan?

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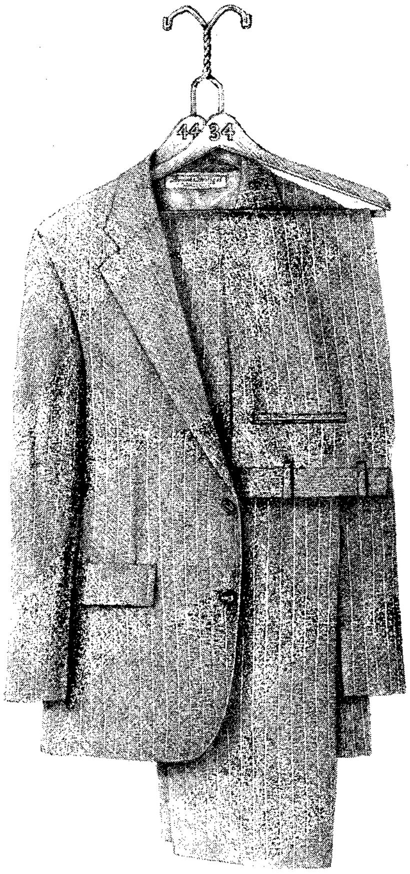

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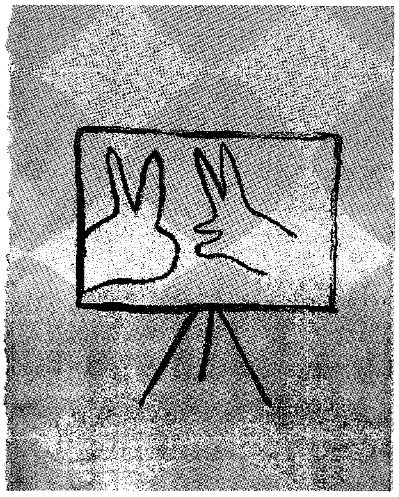
MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

Theatre 2: Sept. 7: "The H-Man" (1959, Inoshiro Honda), with Yumi Shirakawa; and "Battle in Outer Space" (1960, Honda), with Ryo Ikebe. . . . Sept. 8: "Black Moon" (1934, Roy William Neill), with Jack Holt and Fay Wray; and "Zombies of Mora Tau" (1957, Edward L. Cahn), with Gregg Palmer and Allison Hayes. . . . Sept. 9-10: "Hush . . . Hush, Sweet Charlotte" (1965, Robert Aldrich), with Bette Davis, Olivia de Havilland, Joseph Cotten, and Victor Buono; and "Die! Die! My Darling" (1965, Silvio Narizzano), with Tallulah Bankhead and Stefanie Powers. . . . Sept. 11: "The Boogie Man Will Get You" (1942, Lew Landers), with Boris Karloff and Peter Lorre; and Chapters 11 to 15 of "The Shadow" (1935, James Horne), with Victor Jory. . . . Sept. 12: "Dracula" (†); and "The Spanish Dracula" (1931, George Melford), with Carlos Villar. . . . From Sept. 13: "Blade Runner" (1982, Ridley Scott), with Harrison Ford, Rutger Hauer, Brion James, Joanna Cassidy, Daryl Hannah, Sean Young, and William Sanderson.



Theatre 3: "The Boys of St. Vincent" (John N. Smith), with Henry Czerny, Johnny Morina, Sebastian Spence, Lise Roy, and David Hewlett.

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Andre" (George Miller), with Keith Carradine and Tina Majorino; and "Speed" (Jan De Bont), with Keanu Reeves, Dennis Hopper, and Sandra Bullock.
Theatre 2: "Jurassic Park" (Steven Spielberg).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Milk Money" (Richard Benjamin), with Melanie Griffith and Ed Harris.
Theatre 2: "The Little Rascals" (Penelope Spheeris).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Ciao, Professore!" (†).
Theatre 2: "Spanking the Monkey" (†).
Theatre 3: "Salmonberries" (Percy Adlon), with k.d. lang.
Theatre 4: Through Sept. 8: "Latcho Drom" (Tony Gatlif, in Romany); and The Best of the International Tournee of Animation. From Sept. 9: "December Bride" (Thaddeus O'Sullivan), with Saskia Reeves, Donal McCann, and Ciaran Hinds.

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "True Lies" (†).
Theatre 2: "Clear and Present Danger" (†).
Theatre 3: "Color of Night" (†).
Theatre 4: "Natural Born Killers" (†).
Theatre 5: "Natural Born Killers" (†).
Theatre 6: "Forrest Gump" (†).
Theatre 7: "Barcelona" (†).
Theatre 8: Through Sept. 8: "Clear and Present Danger" (†). From Sept. 9: "Rapa Nui" (Kevin Reynolds), with Jason Scott Lee, Esai Morales, and Sandrine Holt.
Theatre 9: "Forrest Gump" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "The Little Rascals" (Penelope Spheeris); and "Jurassic Park" (Steven Spielberg), with Sam Neill, Laura Dern, Jeff Goldblum, and Richard Attenborough.
Theatre 2: "Fresh" (†).
Theatre 3: "Andre" (George Miller), with Keith Carradine and Tina Majorino; and "Blankman" (Mike Binder), with Damon Wayans, David Alan Grier, Robin Givens, Jon Polito, and Jason Alexander.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Forrest Gump" (†).

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "Wolf" (Mike Nichols), with Jack Nicholson and Michelle Pfeiffer.
Theatre 2: "The Flintstones" (Brian Levant), with John Goodman, Rick Moranis, Elizabeth Perkins, and Rosie O'Donnell.
Theatre 3: "Maverick" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson, Jodie Foster, and James Garner.
Theatre 4: "Wyatt Earp" (Lawrence Kasdan), with Kevin Costner, Dennis Quaid, and Gene Hackman.
Theatre 5: "Black Beauty" (Caroline Thompson), with Sean Bean and David Thewlis; and "The House of the Spirits" (Bille August), with Jeremy Irons, Meryl Streep, Glenn Close, and Winona Ryder.
Theatre 6: "Beverly Hills Cop III" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"True Lies" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Ciao, Professore!" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "Like Water for Chocolate" (Alfonso Arau; a Mexican film, in Spanish).
Theatre 2: "Barcelona" (†).

Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th. (586-1900)
"Killing Zoe" (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"À la Mode" (Rémy Duchemin, in French).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Widows' Peak" (John Irvin), with Mia Farrow, Joan Plowright, Natasha Richardson, Jim Broadbent, Adrian Dunbar

Columbus Circle, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"A Simple Twist of Fate" (Gillies MacKinnon), with Steve Martin, Gabriel Byrne, and Catherine O'Hara.

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"Corrina, Corrina" (†).

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Fresh" (†).
Theatre 2: "Café au Lait" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert" (†).
Theatre 4: "Eat Drink Man Woman" (†).
Theatre 5: "Red Rock West" (†).
Theatre 6: "The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"True Lies" (†).

84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 8: "It Could Happen to You" (†) and "The Client" (†). From Sept. 9: "Trial by Jury" (Heywood Gould), with Joanne Whalley-Kilmer, Armand Assante, Gabriel Byrne, and William Hurt.
Theatre 2: "The Mask" (†).
Theatre 3: "Forrest Gump" (†).
Theatre 4: "Natural Born Killers" (†).
Theatre 5: "Clear and Present Danger" (†).
Theatre 6: Through Sept. 8: "Milk Money" (Richard Benjamin), with Melanie Griffith and Ed Harris. From Sept. 9: "A Good Man in Africa" (Bruce Beresford), with Colin Friels, Sean Connery, John Lithgow, Diana Rigg, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Joanne Whalley-Kilmer.

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Andre" (George Miller), with Keith Carradine and Tina Majorino; and "Speed" (Jan De Bont), with Keanu Reeves, Dennis Hopper, and Sandra Bullock.
Theatre 2: "Camp Nowhere" (Jonathan Prince), with Christopher Lloyd.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "The Little Rascals" (Penelope Spheeris); and "Jurassic Park" (Steven Spielberg), with Sam Neill, Laura Dern, Jeff Goldblum, and Richard Attenborough.
Theatre 2: "Color of Night" (†).

MAX MILLER

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: Through Sept. 8: "It Could Happen to You" (†). From Sept. 9: "A Good Man in Africa" (directed by Bruce Beresford), with Colin Friels, Sean Connery, John Lithgow, Diana Rigg, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Joanne Whalley-Kilmer.

Theatre 2: "The Client" (†).

Theatre 3: "Corrina, Corrina" (†).

Theatre 4: Through Sept. 8: "The Mask" (†). From Sept. 9: "Trial by Jury" (Heywood Gould), with Joanne Whalley-Kilmer, Armand Assante, Gabriel Byrne, and William Hurt.

Theatre 5: "The Mask" (†).

Theatre 6: Through Sept. 8: "Wagons East" (Peter Markle), with John Candy and Richard Lewis. From Sept. 9: "The Next Karate Kid" (Christopher Cain), with Noriyuki (Pat) Morita and Hilary Swank.

Theatre 7: "Natural Born Killers" (†).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"Color of Night" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 1: "Fresh" (†).

Theatre 2: "The Lion King" (†).

Theatre 3: "Milk Money" (Richard Benjamin), with Melanie Griffith and Ed Harris.

Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Clear and Present Danger" (†).

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: "The Little Rascals" (Penelope Spheeris); and "Jurassic Park" (Steven Spielberg), with Sam Neill, Laura Dern, Jeff Goldblum, and Richard Attenborough.

Theatre 2: "Blankman" (Mike Binder), with Damon Wayans, David Alan Grier, Robin Givens, Jon Polito, and Jason Alexander.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

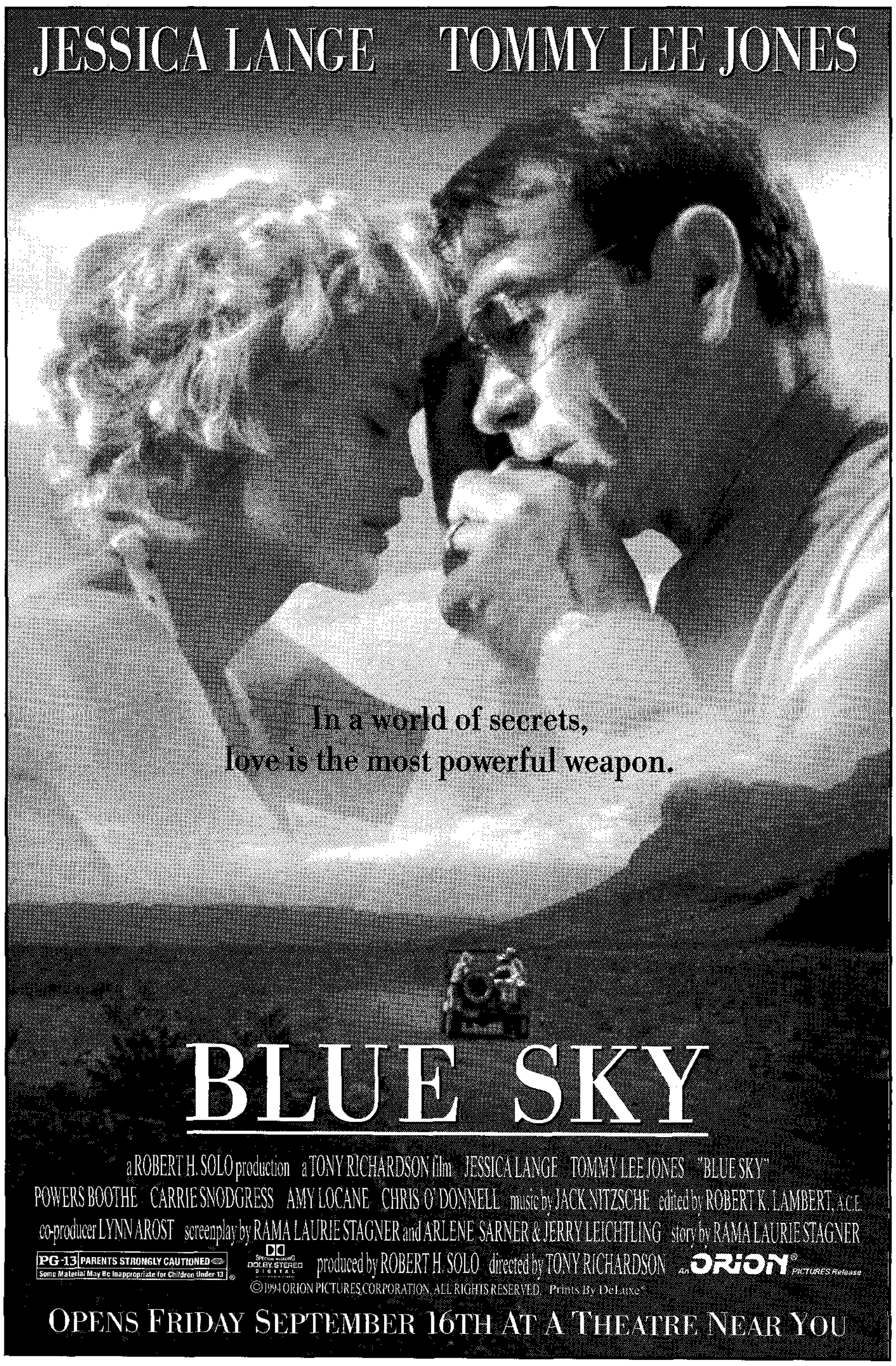
Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A series of films from M-G-M studios. Sept. 8 at 2:30 and Sept. 10 at 5: "Of Mice and Men" (1992, directed by Gary Sinise), with John Malkovich and Sinise. . . . Sept. 8 at 6 and Sept. 10 at 3: "Pennies from Heaven" (1981, Herbert Ross), with Steve Martin and Bernadette Peters. . . . Sept. 8 at 8: "Mutiny on the Bounty" (1935, Frank Lloyd), with Charles Laughton, Franchot Tone, and Clark Gable. . . . Sept. 9 at 2:30: "The Good Earth" (1937, Sidney Franklin), with Luise Rainer, Paul Muni, Walter Connolly, and Charley Grapewin. . . . Sept. 9 at 6 and Sept. 10 at 12:30: "Flesh and the Devil" (1927, Clarence Brown; silent), with Greta Garbo, John Gilbert, and Lars Hanson. . . . Sept. 9 at 8:15 and Sept. 11 at 12:30: "Ninotchka" (1939, Ernst Lubitsch), with Garbo, Melvyn Douglas, and Sig Rumann. . . . Sept. 11 at 3: "Dead of Winter" (†). . . . Sept. 11 at 5 and Sept. 13 at 2:30: "Greed" (1924, Erich von Stroheim; silent), with Gibson Gowland, ZaSu Pitts, and Jean Hersholt. . . . Sept. 12 at 2:30: "The Circle" (1925, Frank Borzage; silent), with Eleanor Boardman and Malcolm McGregor; and "The Monster" (1925, Roland West; silent), with Lon Chaney and Gertrude Olmsted. . . . Sept. 12 at 6: "Madame Satan" (1930, Cecil B. De Mille), with Lillian Roth and Roland Young. . . . Sept. 13 at 6: "Pretty Ladies" (1925, Monta Bell; silent), with Pitts, Tom Moore, and Conrad Nagel; and "Lights of Old Broadway" (1925, Bell; silent), with Marion Davies and Nagel.

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—A program of films directed by Tony Richardson. Sept. 7 at 2: "Hamlet" (1969), with Nicol Williamson. . . . Sept. 7-8 at 4:30, Sept. 9 at 4:15, Sept. 10 at 6:15, Sept. 11 at 4, and Sept. 13 at 6:30: "The Border" (1982), with Jack Nicholson, Elpidia Carrillo, Valerie Perrine, Harvey Keitel, and Warren Oates. . . . Sept. 7 at 6:30: "Laughter in the Dark" (1969), with Nicol Williamson and Anna Karina. . . . Sept. 7 at 8:30 and Sept. 9 at 8:45: "A Delicate Balance" (1973), with Katharine Hepburn, Paul Scofield, Lee Remick, Kate Reid, Joseph Cotten, and Betsy Blair. . . . Sept. 8 at 2, Sept. 9 at 6:30, Sept. 10 at 4, Sept. 11 at 8:30, and Sept. 12 at 2: "Joseph Andrews" (1978), with Ann-Margret, Peter Firth, and Beryl Reid. . . . Sept. 9 at 2, Sept. 10 at 8:30, Sept. 11 at 6:15, Sept. 12 at 4:15, and Sept. 13 at 4 and 8:30: "The Hotel New Hampshire" (†). . . . Sept. 12 at 6:30: "Blue Sky" (1991), with Jessica Lange and Tommy Lee Jones. . . . Sept. 12 at 8:30 and Sept. 13 at 2: "Hills Like White Elephants," with James Woods and Melanie Griffith; and two other episodes of the HBO series "Women and Men.". . . ¶ Sept. 10-11 at 2: "Treasure Island" (1934, Victor Fleming), with Wallace Beery, Jackie Cooper, and Lionel Barrymore.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—Sept. 10 at 2: A program of short films with Fatty Arbuckle and Mabel Normand. . . . ¶ Sept. 10 at 4: A program of short films with Arbuckle and Buster Keaton. . . . ¶ Sept. 11 at 2: A program of short films with Arbuckle, Charlie Chaplin, and Harold Lloyd. . . . ¶ Sept. 11 at 4: "The Life of the Party" (1920, Joseph Henabery), with Arbuckle.

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850)—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On Sept. 11 at 7, the feature will be "I Could Go On Singing" (†).

Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (570-3949)—Sept. 9 at 7: "The World According to Garp" (1982, George Roy Hill), with Robin Williams, John Lithgow, Glenn Close, and Mary Beth Hurt. . . . ¶ Sept. 10 at 3: "E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial" (1982, Steven Spielberg), with Henry Thomas, Dee Wallace, Drew Barrymore, Robert Macnaughton, and Peter Coyote. . . . ¶ Sept. 10 at 7: "Autumn Sonata" (1978, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Ingrid Bergman, Liv Ullmann, Lena Nyman, and Halvar Björk.



JESSICA LANGE TOMMY LEE JONES
In a world of secrets,
love is the most powerful weapon.
BLUE SKY
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POWERS BOOTHE CARRIE SNODGRESS AMY LOCANE CHRIS O'DONNELL music by JACK NITZSCHE edited by ROBERT K. LAMBERT, A.C.E.
co-producer LYNN AROST screenplay by RAMA LAURIE STAGNER and ARLENE SARNER & JERRY LEICHTLING story by RAMA LAURIE STAGNER
PG-13 PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED Some Material May Be Inappropriate for Children Under 13
DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL
produced by ROBERT H. SOLO directed by TONY RICHARDSON
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OPENS FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 16TH AT A THEATRE NEAR YOU

MOVIES IN BRIEF

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

December Bride—In a turn-of-the-century Irish village, a young unmarried woman (Saskia Reeves) defies propriety by living with and bearing the children of two brothers (Donal McCann and Ciaran Hinds). Based on the 1951 novel by Sam Hanna Bell. Directed by Thaddeus O'Sullivan. Opening September 9.

A Good Man in Africa—Bruce Beresford directed William Boyd's screenplay, which is based on Boyd's 1981 novel. Colin Friels plays a frustrated mid-level British diplomat posted in a West African country, and Sean Connery is a cantankerous doctor who refuses to share in the prevailing political corruption. With John Lithgow, Diana Rigg, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Joanne Whalley-Kilmer. Opening September 9.

The Next Karate Kid—In the fourth installment of the "Karate Kid" series, the teen-ager with a lot to learn about life and the martial arts is a girl (Hilary Swank). Noriyuki (Pat) Morita reprises his role as the wise teacher Miyagi. Directed by Christopher Cain, from a script by Mark Lee. Opening September 9.

Paul Bowles: The Complete Outsider—A documentary portrait of the writer. Filmed in Tangier. Directed by Regina Weinreich and Catherine Warnow. Opening September 7.

Rapa Nui—A Polynesian adventure story set on Easter Island, or Rapa Nui, before the arrival of the Europeans. Jason Scott Lee and Esai Morales are rivals for leadership and for the love of a beautiful young woman (Sandrine Holt). Directed by Kevin Reynolds, and co-written by Reynolds and Tim Rose Price. Opening September 9.

Trial by Jury—Joanne Whalley-Kilmer is a single mother whose son becomes a target of threats after she is chosen as a juror in a Mafia murder case. With Gabriel Byrne as a U.S. attorney, Armand Assante as the Mob boss, and William Hurt as a corrupt cop. Directed by Heywood Gould, who wrote the screenplay with Jordan Katz. Opening September 9.

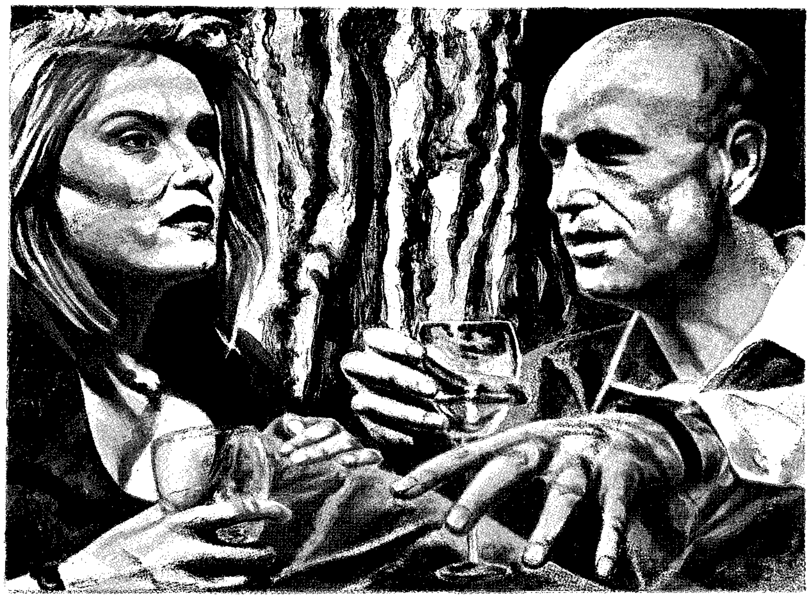
What Happened Was . . .—Winner of the Grand Jury Prize at the 1994 Sundance Film Festival. Tom Noonan wrote, directed, and stars in this blow-by-blow saga of an awkward first date. With Karen Sillas. Opening September 9.

CURRENT FILMS

(The following notes are by Anthony Lane, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given.)

The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert—Paragons of camp become summer campers, of sorts, in this cult-pleasing tale of a transsexual (Terence Stamp) and two drag queens (Hugo Weaving and Guy Pearce) who take a lip-synching act from Sydney to a resort in arid central Australia. (The title refers to their bus.) Stephan Elliott, the writer-director, has one original idea—posing creatures of the night in wild sunbaked settings. Apart from these forays into the picturesque picaresque, and Stamp's terrific deadpan gravity, the movie indulges in predictable transvestite laughs and heartbreaks; as crossover drag sagas go, it's neither as robustly funny as "La Cage aux Folles" nor as lively and poetic as the best parts of "Outrageous!"—M.S. (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Tower East, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Barcelona—The second film by the writer and director Whit Stillman ("Metropolitan") is a culture-clash comedy about a pair of conservative young Americans (played by Taylor Nichols and Chris Eigeman) in early-eighties Barcelona. Although the picture begins promisingly, its charm peters out fast. Every scene seems to make the same not very *interesting point: that Americans get a bum* rap from foreigners. This movie isn't a carbon copy of Stillman's début feature, but it doesn't feel like much of an advance, either. His style is placid and a little smug—prematurely gray. In just two movies he has found the sort of rut that most filmmakers take decades to settle into. Also with Tushka Bergen and Mira Sorvino.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 8/15/94.) (Angelika Film Center, Eastside Playhouse, Chelsea Cinemas, and Carnegie Hall Cinema.)



Opening September 9, Karen Sillas and Tom Noonan in "What Happened Was . . ."

NICK TAGGART

Café au Lait—Directed by, and with, Mathieu Kassovitz. In French. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Angelika Film Center, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Ciao, Professore!—It's a baggy-pants comedy version of "Christ Stopped at Eboli," with Paolo Villaggio as an idealistic third-grade teacher from Northern Italy mistakenly assigned to the squalid Neapolitan village of Corzano. The conflicts he faces are played for guffaws as well as poignancy. Smacking one tough kid anguishes Villaggio, but the director, Lina Wertmüller, thinks it makes him more of a man; she replaces the usual schoolhouse sanctimony with her salt-of-the-earth smugness. Many of the boys and girls are so unvaryingly "lively" you wish Villaggio would try to solve their problems by administering Ritalin. In Italian.—M.S. (Quad Cinema, and 57th St. Playhouse.)

Clear and Present Danger—Further adventures of Jack Ryan (Harrison Ford), the courageous and incorruptible C.I.A. analyst who is the hero of Tom Clancy's ungainly novels. The director, Phillip Noyce, whose "Patriot Games" (1992) was a surprisingly elegant Clancy adaptation, has once again taken a tub of prose and sweated it into a sleek, classically proportioned suspense picture. The screenwriters—Donald Stewart, Steven Zaillian, and John Milius—do a terrific job of keeping the insanely intricate plot from bogging down in confusion. And Noyce brings off a couple of memorable thriller set pieces: a furious, brilliantly edited ambush in a narrow Bogotá street; a tense and funny computer duel between Ryan and a weaselly C.I.A. bureaucrat played by Henry Czerny. The filmmakers haven't simply tamed the rogue elephant of Clancy's narrative; they've turned it into something that moves as gracefully and as powerfully as a gazelle. Also with Willem Dafoe, Donald Moffat, Harris Yulin, Joaquim de Almeida, James Earl Jones, and Anne Archer.—T.R. (8/15/94) (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, New York Twin, East 85th Street, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Astor Plaza.)

The Client—Joel Schumacher's thriller, based on a John Grisham best-seller, has a familiar chase-picture plot: innocent citizen stumbles on some incriminating information about the Mob, and runs like hell. The reluctant witness here is an eleven-year-old Memphis boy, Mark Sway (Brad Renfro), whose lawyer, Reggie Love (Susan Sarandon), acts as a sort of surrogate mother. Her legal duel with the steely prosecutor Roy Foltrigg (Tommy Lee Jones), who wants Mark to testify, plays like a desperate, drawn-out custody battle. This is safe-as-houses entertainment, directed with no particular finesse, but it's refreshingly straightforward and unpretentious. It's the first Grisham-based thriller that actually lowers itself to provide a thrill or two.—T.R. (8/1/94) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Murray Hill Cinemas, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ 19th Street East 6, New York Twin, and 84th Street Sixplex; through Sept. 8.)

Color of Night—This comic murder mystery about psychotherapists and their patients is the first movie that Richard Rush has directed since "The Stunt Man" (1980), and it gives the audience nearly as wild a ride. The cut version of the film, which is now playing in theatres, is terrifically enjoyable, but it's so unstable that it plays as parody: it's the "Beat the Devil" of erotic thrillers. In the director's cut—which is six-minutes-longer and will be released on video—the plot actually makes some sense, and the performances of the stars, Bruce Willis and Jane March, are much more effective. The theatrical version is worth seeing, though, for Rush's witty, imaginative visual conceits, and for the sensational supporting cast, which includes Rubén Blades, Lesley Ann Warren, Brad Dourif, Kevin J. O'Connor, Lance Henriksen, and Scott Bakula. Screenplay by Matthew Chapman and Billy Ray.—T.R. (9/5/94) (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Sutton, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Olympia, and Embassy 1.)

Corrina, Corrina—It's the fifties, and Ray Liotta is a widowed, atheistic jingle writer searching for a housekeeper who can also play surrogate mommy for seven-year-old Tina Majorino. He lucks out with Whoopi Goldberg. She boasts a degree in musicology and she's a natural with kids and with words—she can crack a rhyme scheme for Jell-O Instant Pudding. Goldberg gives a varied, even jazzy performance as Ms. Wonderful. But the movie is hopelessly pedantic—chock full of lessons about grief, racism, and, so help us, God. The bright spots include Joan Cusack's ticky cameo as Goldberg's tippling, sex-starved predecessor; Curtis Williams, Jr.,'s showoff gaiety as Goldberg's nephew; club singer Jevetta Steele doing "Over the Rainbow"; and choice cuts by Sarah Vaughan, Dinah Washington, and Louis Armstrong on the soundtrack. Jessie Nelson produced, directed, and wrote the

IN BRIEF—Cont'd

semi-autobiographical script.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Cinema I, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and Criterion Center.)

Eat Drink Man Woman—Another film comedy from Ang Lee, the director of "The Wedding Banquet." The aging Mr. Chu (Sihung Lung) is a widowed chef, living in Taipei with his three daughters, each of whom is getting itchy for the world beyond. (Watch out for the exquisite Chien-Lien Wu as Jia-Chien, the pushiest of the three.) Mr. Chu is a King Lear of the kitchen: a master on his own ground, slapping fish around and blowing air into a boiled duck, but gradually losing his sense of taste and his power to rule. The movie is more likable than memorable; you come out running for the nearest restaurant. In Mandarin.—A.L. (Angelika Film Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Forrest Gump—As all the world now knows, Tom Hanks plays Forrest Gump, a simple Alabama soul who serves his country without hurting a fly; he saves his comrades in Vietnam, woos the dippy Jenny (Robin Wright), and runs back and forth across the continent. Hanks does his best to convince us that Gump is, in fact, a character, and not merely a bulging sack of virtues, but the movie takes the fight out of him. Directed by Robert Zemeckis.—A.L. (7/25/94) (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, Baronet, Coronet, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Guild, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

Fresh—With Sean Nelson and Samuel L. Jackson, directed by Boaz Yakin. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Village Theatre VII, First & 62nd Cinemas, 86th Street East Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Embassy.)

It Could Happen to You—The main characters in Andrew Bergman's sweet-spirited romantic farce are a cop named Charlie (Nicolas Cage) and a diner waitress named Yvonne (Bridget Fonda)—a pair of generous, honest, kindhearted working-class lovers who might have seemed too good to be true even in one of Frank Capra's sunny populist comedies. Rosie Perez, as Charlie's beady-eyed, greedy wife, gets most of the big laughs, but it's the relationship between the cop and the waitress that gives the picture its distinctive comic spirit. The joy that Charlie and Yvonne take in doing good has the erotic quality of a shared secret, a ticklish pleasure that only they know about.—T.R. (8/1/94) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, and Gemini. . . . ¶ 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center; through Sept. 8.)

Killing Zoe—The first-time director is Roger Avary, one of a new breed of filmmakers who appear to conceive of cinema as a superior form of abattoir. (He co-wrote "True Romance" and "Pulp Fiction.") Not since the dying days of Jacobean tragedy has this much blood been spilled in the name of public entertainment, although you'd be pressed to find anything tragic in the antics of Avary's creations. Eric Stoltz plays a safebreaker who comes to Paris to see an old friend, Eric (Jean-Hugues Anglade). Together with their band of merry men (the merriment is all heroin and liquor), they try to rob a bank, and foul it up. From time to time—during the opening credits, or at the start of the raid—the movie kicks into life, with traces of Godard in its hectic insouciance. But this eagerness to find a style has nothing to launch from—no obsessions, no arguments, no strong feelings, just a vague desire to rub our noses in the dirt. Also starring Julie Delpy as a whore with—of course—a heart of gold.—A.L. (8/22-29/94) (Angelika Film Center, and Angelika 57.)

The Lion King—Disney's new animated feature is a coming-of-age story about animal royalty. It's "Bambi," but with carnivores. The hero, a young lion named Simba, is born to the purple, but before he can ascend to the throne he has to make cute friends, court a soft-eyed female of the species, and see his father die (in a scene that may actually jerk kids' tears more shamelessly than its counterpart in "Bambi"). Between traumas, the movie serves up soothingly banal musical numbers (composed by Elton John and Tim Rice) and silly, rambunctious comedy. Directed by Roger Allers and Rob Minkoff.—T.R. (6/20/94) (Village East Cinemas, Sutton, Orpheum VII, and Embassy.)

The Mask—Genial goonery. Jim Carrey stars as a sweet loser who gets an id tune-up when he puts on a super-powered Norse mask and becomes a zoot-suited jolly green giant. Since Carrey looks as if he were made of Play-Doh anyway, the computer animation that allows him to bounce and gyrate appears to spring from his own pliable core. The funniest moment comes when Carrey mimes the effects of the Mask *without* special effects. The gangland plot is flimsy and the jokes are erratic, but it's a far better showcase for Carrey's comic-from-Uranus talent than "Ace Ventura." With Max as Milo the plucky terrier. Charles Russell directed Mike Werb's script.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Cinema II; through Sept. 8.)

Natural Born Killers—"Bonnie and Clyde" in a blender. Oliver Stone uses fractured, blindingly fast editing to depict the warped consciousness of Mickey (Woody Harrelson) and Mallory (Juliette Lewis), a pair of young sociopaths in love. They're familiar types, and Stone's "ideas" about American violence turn out to be the same glib received notions that we've seen in countless other outlaw-couple movies. The oddest thing about this would-be satire is that, for all the gore and hysteria, the film doesn't feel particularly impassioned; it's a frivolous barrage—as pointlessly head-splitting as a Professor Irwin Corey monologue, and not nearly as funny. Also with Robert Downey, Jr., Tommy Lee Jones, Russell Means, and Rodney Dangerfield.—T.R. (9/5/94) (Village Theatre VII, Murray Hill Cinemas, Beekman, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Red Rock West—This clever thriller about a good-hearted loner (Nicolas Cage) who trips and falls into a murder plot ranks tops among low-budget neo-noirs. Taut and deadpan witty, it makes spooky use of the setting—a small, windblown Western town—and its surprises actually add up: for once, an angular narrative serves to sharpen the characters. Dennis Hopper and J. T. Walsh do their freshest, snappiest work in years, and Lara Flynn Boyle is a tense, ambiguous love object. Cage's shaggy hangdog charm and core of intelligence and rectitude keep the audience rooting for the hero after several dumb moves. John Dahl's direction, like the script he wrote with his brother Rick, is sure and economical.—M.S. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Spanking the Monkey—A movie about mother-son incest may sound like a daring writing-directing début, but David O. Russell, the fledgling auteur, stacks the deck like an old sharpie. The mother (Alberta Watson) is frustrated, careless, confined to bed with a broken leg, and medicated for pain and depression. The son (Jeremy Davies) is pent up every which way. When he returns from his freshman year at M.I.T., his father (Benjamin Hendrickson) orders him to give up an internship with the surgeon general's office to take care of her. The absentee husband is oblivious and tyrannical toward them both. All-too-obvious psychological dynamics stunt even the black comedy. Watson displays spunk, but the only completely lucid and spontaneous performances are by young Carla Gallo as the boy's would-be girlfriend and Matthew Puckett as his cheerfully stupid buddy.—M.S. (Plaza, and Quad Cinema.)

True Lies—James Cameron and Arnold Schwarzenegger join forces for their first outing since "Terminator 2," and it's a bumpy ride. Schwarzenegger stumbles into James Bond territory as a suave international spy named Harry Tasker; it's a stiff and rather sad sight. The middle chunk of the film defies belief—not with special effects, unfortunately, but with humdrum misogyny. Harry suspects his wife (Jamie Lee Curtis) of adultery, kidnaps her, and subjects her to a series of humiliations, apparently in an effort to win back her love. Yeah, right. Tom Arnold saves the show as Harry's sidekick.—A.L. (7/25/94) (Movieland 8th Street Sixplex, 34th Street Showplace, Manhattan Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and Regency.)

REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Michael Sragow.)

Dead of Winter (1987)—This derivative thriller takes place in an old dark house in upstate New York during a non-stop snowstorm. Mary Steenburgen goes there to replace another actress in an independent film, and instead discovers that she is the lead pawn in a game of blackmail. The chief bad guy is a wheelchair-bound shrink (Jan Rubes) pretending to be a producer. It's an insult to hungry actresses that Steenburgen buys his act—Rubes exudes the heaviest Bela Lugosi-like charm. Roddy McDowall steals the show as his hippity-hoppity assistant, with wizened expressions and airy vocal tricks that recall his "Planet of the Apes" days, and prim tics that echo Anthony Perkins as Norman Bates. With William Russ. Arthur Penn directed Marc Shmuger's script.—M.S. (Museum of Modern Art; Sept. 11.)

Dracula (1931)—It begins well, wandering around the crypt of Dracula's castle in the Carpathian Mountains as the vampires get up from their coffins. But this first American version, directed by Tod Browning, was adapted from a play based on the Bram Stoker novel, rather than from the novel itself, and it becomes too stagey. It was a tremendous popular success, however (it was advertised as "The Strangest Love Story of All"), and spawned many sequels. As Count Dracula, Bela Lugosi is the courtly personification of evil. He had played the role on Broadway in 1927 and had toured in it for years, and he seemed inside it in a wonderfully hammy, slightly demented way; his stilted manner and his ripe Hungarian accent have been imitated and parodied by subsequent Draculas. With pale Helen Chandler, who seems too anemic to attract a vampire, David Manners, Frances Dade, Edward Van Sloan, and the peerlessly degraded Dwight Frye, always looking for insects to munch on.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; Sept. 12.)

The Hotel New Hampshire (1984)—Tony Richardson directed and wrote this skillful, futile compression of John Irving's novel, capturing the author's distinctive moods—giddy yet downbeat sentimentality, slapstick Weltschmerz. Sticking close to Irving's chronicle of a teacher (Beau Bridges) who puts his family into the hotel business, Richardson's movie encompasses normal sibling and parent-child traumas, *plus* a performing bear, rape, incest, the Second World War, wild-eyed radicalism, and media celebrity. The rush of incidents has no sweep. It gives off an odd aura of neurasthenia; Richardson inadvertently exposes Irving's fiction as a cross between a Rube Goldberg contraption and an infernal machine. Jodie Foster, Jennie Dundas, Nastassja Kinski, and Dorsey Wright have their moments, but they're fleeting: eloquent snapshots in an Addams-family scrapbook.—M.S. (Walter Reade Theatre; Sept. 9-13.)

I Could Go On Singing (1963)—Dreadful, but often fascinating: Judy Garland in the sort of movie that is usually made about a performer long after the events, and with someone else playing the lead. Her face puffy, her manner distressed, she goes through a sort of "Madame X" version of a selfish singer's life, in which she belts out numbers at the Palladium. Made in England and directed by Ronald Neame. With Dirk Bogarde, Jack Klugman, and Aline MacMahon.—P.K. (A Different Light Bookstore; Sept. 11.)

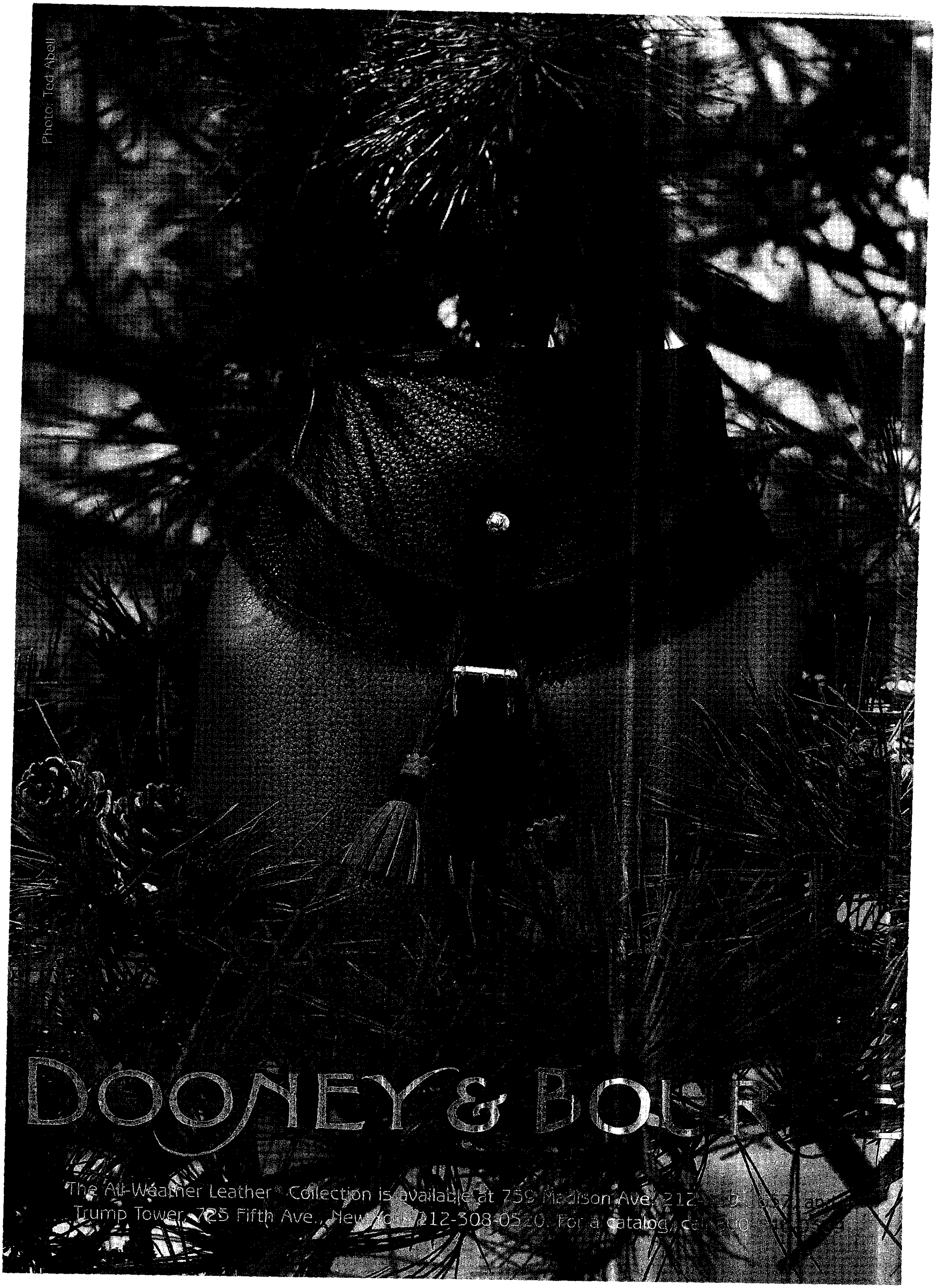


Photo: Ted Abell

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THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

THE IMMORAL ANIMAL?

In recent weeks, a new contender for the title Book Most Heatedly Discussed by People Who Haven't Finished Reading It (or Even Laid Eyes on It) has emerged. It is Robert Wright's "The Moral Animal," which was just published by Pantheon and was excerpted in a recent issue of *Time* that bore the explosive cover line "INFIDELITY: IT MAY BE IN OUR GENES." According to Wright, if you look at love in a survival-of-the-species kind of way, we have a genetically encoded need to cheat. Men are programmed to maximize the propagation of the species by scattering their seed as widely as possible, and women are programmed to seek out mates who will provide a maximum of what Wright calls Male Parental Investment; i.e., guys who will stick around and supply food and other important resources during the nine months of pregnancy and the difficult years of child rearing. Wright, though, is interested in much more than mere skirt-chasing, since, as he points out, we are human, and can use our superior mental powers to interfere with genetic imperatives in ways that other animals can't. We can make choices, feel guilt, form ethical judgments, and, of course, discuss our positions endlessly.

E-mail exchange between a fifty-something bachelor who's had a number of girlfriends over the last thirty years (usually more than one at a time) and a no-nonsense married female colleague:

HE: Have you heard about Robert Wright's new book, "The Moral Animal"? I read about a third of it over the weekend, and it's wonderful. It's going to be a very important book, I think.

SHE: Yes I've heard about it. Men sleep around, and women look for loyal mates. Please, spare me@*#! Apparently, he does point out that women are more likely to cheat around the time of ovulation, though. Do you find that to be true? (Just kidding.) Do you turn the pages and say to yourself, "This is my life"?

HE: Well, it's nice to know my behavior is not entirely my fault. . . .

Phone-rant received from a thirty-year-old woman, after her second date with an older, divorced father of three:

He spent the whole evening talking about Robert Wright's new book. Have you read it yet? Well, I haven't, but it's not like it's anything new that men want to scatter their seed all over the place, and the really interesting question is: What was the subtext of our conversation? I mean, he told me all about how women are seeking men who will be good parents, and how he notices that the babes really check him out on the street when he is with his children. It's like the idea that Tom Hanks in "Sleepless" is so much sexier because he's a cute father! Well, maybe he is! What a weird date! I felt like we were on "Crossfire" and I was supposed to take a position, but if I took the position that Wright's theory sounded reasonable he would think I was gunning for him with his Male Parental Whatever, while on the other hand if I said that genetics aren't everything that makes the world go round, and that I was happy being single and didn't necessarily believe that a woman has to marry and have kids to be happy, he would tell me I'm just in denial. And meanwhile I just wanted to have dinner with the guy!

Conversation overheard between two single women journalists in their child-bearing years:

SHE: So what about this guy Robert Wright? Do you know him?

SHE: I met him once or twice in the office of *The New Republic*.

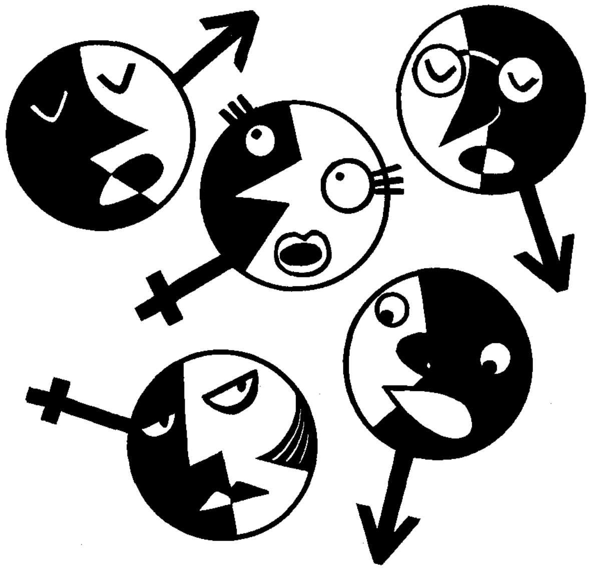
SHE: And?

SHE: Well, did you look at his book-jacket picture? He's really straitlaced and nerdy and adorable—kind of tall and skinny and cowboylike. And he's riotously funny.

SHE: Is he married?

SHE: Of course.

SHE: Bummer.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROBERT DEMICHIELL

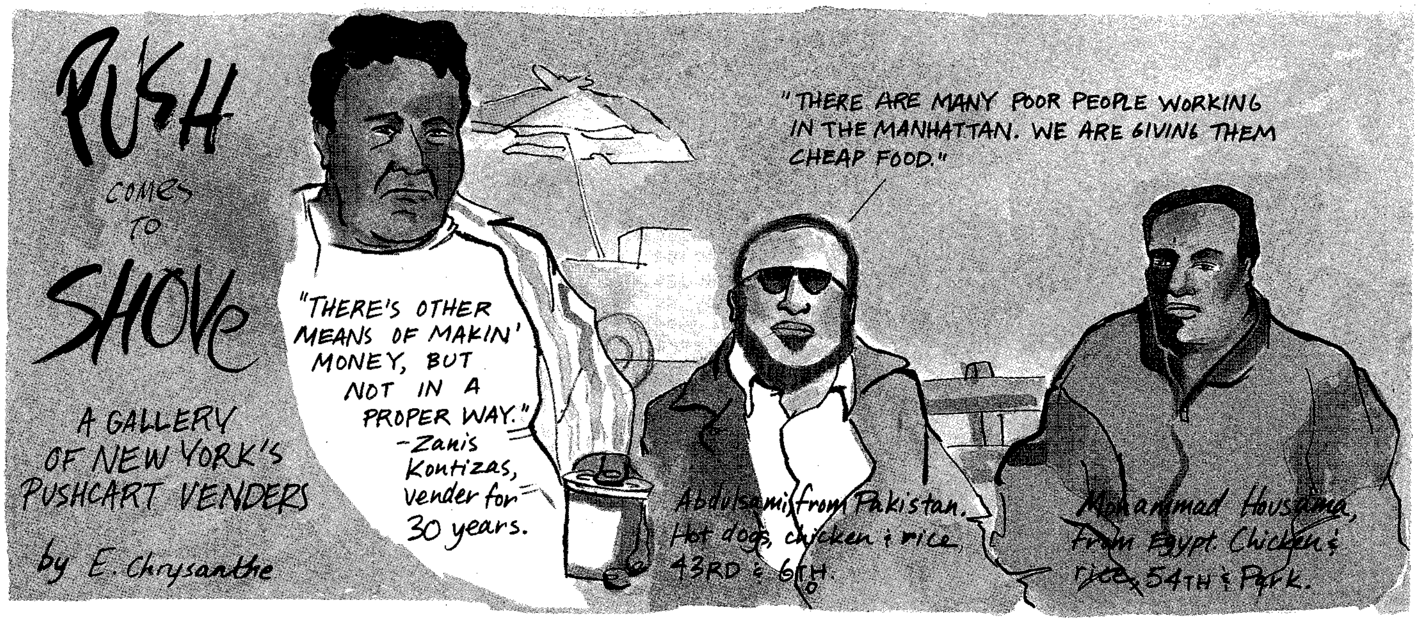
E-mail update from the incorrigible bachelor:

I finished Wright's book. I take back what I said about it being a comforting justification for sleeping around all over the place. It's a deeply moral book. It's not just about the genetic basis for infidelity but the genetic basis for marriage itself. It makes me want to get married more than anything else I've ever read.

KING'S TENNIS COURTIERS

The holder of Gold Membership Card Numero Uno of the Association of Tennis Professionals is Alan King, the sixty-seven-year-old tennis impresario,

THE TALK OF THE TOWN'S ARTIST AT LARGE


PUSH comes to SHOVE
A GALLERY OF NEW YORK'S PUSHCART VENDERS
by E. Chrysanthe
"THERE'S OTHER MEANS OF MAKIN' MONEY, BUT NOT IN A PROPER WAY." -Zanis Kontizas, vender for 30 years.
"THERE ARE MANY POOR PEOPLE WORKING IN THE MANHATTAN. WE ARE GIVING THEM CHEAP FOOD."
Abdulsami from Pakistan. Hot dogs, chicken & rice, 43RD & 6TH.
Mohammad Housama, From Egypt. Chicken & rice, 54TH & Park.

actor, and standup comic (going back half a century to places like Leon & Eddie's, on Fifty-second Street, and Slapsie Maxie's, on Beverly Boulevard), who is also the holder (going back sixteen years) of Numero 51A, the best six-seat, sixteen-thousand-eight-hundred-dollar courtside box at the Grand Slam U.S. Open. Last Monday, there he was—gray-bearded à la Freud, gray-haired, young-faced, and nattily attired in cream-colored slacks, brown Gucci moccasins, no socks, black T-shirt, white open-at-the-throat overshirt—in his box, in what is officially known as Louis Armstrong Stadium, for the opening, as he has been for nearly every day session and every night session since 1978. Restless, jumpy, alert to both the tennis in front of him and the people around him, he was entertaining—in addition to his trim, attractive wife, Jeanette, and his nine-year-old grandson, Billy—the screen and stage writer Peter Stone, who is of the same generation as Mr. King but not of the same nattiness in dress. Stone was writerly sloppy, in chinos and a red-and-white checked cotton shirt, which was stretched over an ample midriff. In fact, the champ of nattiness in the box was grandson Billy, who wore a dark-green "Fresh Jive" cap, a way oversized U.S. Open T-shirt, and way, way, way oversized dark-blue shorts reaching almost to his ankles, with a heavy chain attached to a belt and anchored, in pocket, to a huge black wallet, and black high-top sneakers.

Everyone was somewhat distressed by what was happening on the court (Boris Becker was losing to Richey Reneberg), so host and guests took up some indirectly related matters, beginning with who else would be invited to sit in Box 51A in future sessions.

Alan: Our friend, Lola Finkelstein, also she plays tennis, and my doctors, my agents, my sprinkler man, and Zubin Mehta. Every year for the finals, I invite Zubin Mehta.

Stone's complaint: Alan's gone to golf. Steve Levy, Jeanette—all gone to golf. Thank God I've still got a once-a-week game—on the court on the thirty-ninth floor of the U.N. Plaza Hotel. Mort Zuckerman is in it. Mort Janklow is in it. All the Morts still play.

Alan: This is my two-week vacation. My tennis vacation. No golf. Jeanette, sit down! Why are you standing up, holding your purse?

Jeanette: I've got to tee off at eight tomorrow morning. I need to get some sleep.

Stone's complaint (about the players): Nobody comes to net anymore. The only time they come to net is to shake hands.

Alan: The Australians were the great serve-and-volley ones. They don't make them like that anymore—Newcombe, Hoad, Rosewall, Laver. They never got better than Rod Laver. And they never threw their socks into the stands.

Billy: How about their shoes?

Stone: Harry Hopman coached Laver.

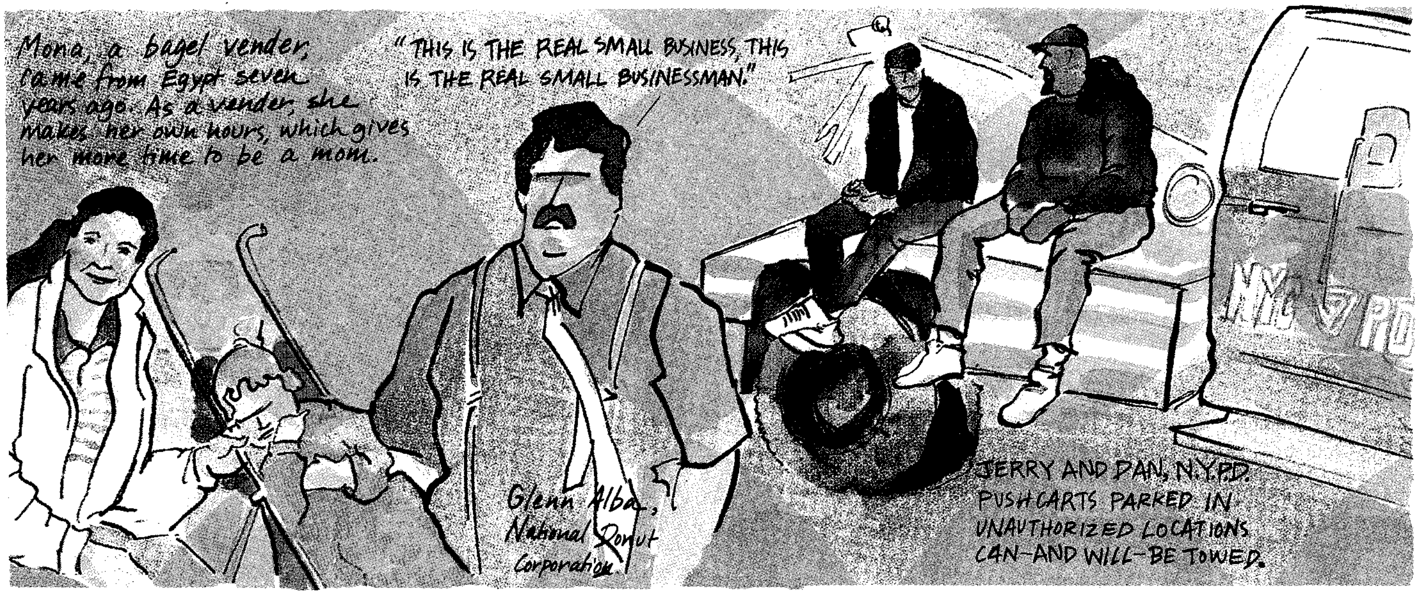
Alan: ZaSu *Pitts* could have coached Laver. Jeanette, sit down! This is tennis week. This week and next week. Tennis.

MAKING AIRWAVES

LARRY JOSEPHSON is your basic fat, balding, bearded, neurotic, divorced, nostalgic romantic-anarchist Jewish guy—except that he gets to talk about all this stuff on his radio show. In the sixties, Larry attained cult status as the dyspeptic morning host of the leftier-than-thou public station WBAI, but now, after a wandering-in-the-desert phase, he has popped up as the host of "Bridges," a weekly program on public radio in which he interviews conservative intellectuals.

The other morning, we rode with Larry down to the office of the *Wall Street Journal*, where he was to tilt with *Journal* editor and remorseless ideological crusader Robert L. Bartley, for a program to air on WNYC later this month. Larry talked about the women who had left him, including his second wife, and the producer of his previous show, "Modern Times." He was getting into a snows-of-yesteryear funk. "The dirty little secret of public radio," he said, "is that it's become part of the corporate state, as we used to say in the sixties." The only reason the suits had approved "Bridges," he explained, was that they were sensitive to the charge that public radio was a liberal hothouse. And so Larry was interviewing right-wingers instead of talking about his cat.

The time for taping having arrived, we were ushered into the *Journal's* studio. Mr. Bartley is a Lutheran from Minnesota, thin to the point of asperity, reserved, and exceedingly soft-spoken. His conversation with Larry had


Mona, a bagel vender, came from Egypt seven years ago. As a vender, she makes her own hours, which gives her more time to be a mom.
"THIS IS THE REAL SMALL BUSINESS, THIS IS THE REAL SMALL BUSINESSMAN."
Glenn Alba, National Donut Corporation
JERRY AND DAN, N.Y.P.D. PUSHCARTS PARKED IN UNAUTHORIZED LOCATIONS CAN—AND WILL—BE TOWED.
NYC PD

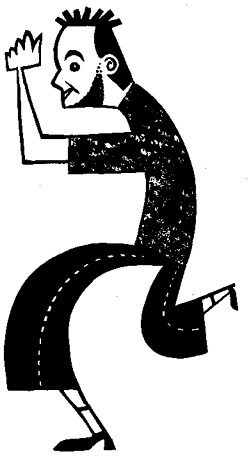
some of the earmarks of a dialogue of the deaf. Larry began by quoting a notorious 1993 *Journal* editorial that cited August, 1968, when the Democrats held their nominating convention alongside Yippie protesters, as the moment when the nation "began to tip off the emotional tracks." This inspired a rambling Larryesque monologue involving Abbie and Jerry and Bill Kunstler, the stifling atmosphere of the late fifties, and the corporate economy. Mr. Bartley looked somewhat disconcerted, and finally explained that the editorial had been prompted by the murder of the abortion doctor David Gunn. A direct line, he maintained, could be drawn from the Vietnam protesters to the tactics of the anti-abortion movement.

Now it was Larry's turn to be nonplussed. He cited another editorial, whose author regretted that it had become impossible to refer to America as "a Christian nation." "As a secular humanist Jew," Larry said, "I find that really offensive." Mr. Bartley, with a very tight smile, said that he certainly hadn't meant to denigrate Judaism. Many of the paper's "moralistic" editorials, Mr. Bartley explained, were written by Jews. "That one?" Larry shot back. "I doubt it," Mr. Bartley conceded.

Finally, Larry was emboldened to bring up one of his idées fixes—women who marginalize men by adopting children or visiting a sperm bank. "You know what a baster baby is?" he asked his guest. The term, he helpfully explained, referred to a baby produced by sperm injected with a turkey baster. Mr. Bartley, looking acutely embarrassed, said, "The trend toward single-parent families is bad for society." The two men, at last, had agreed.

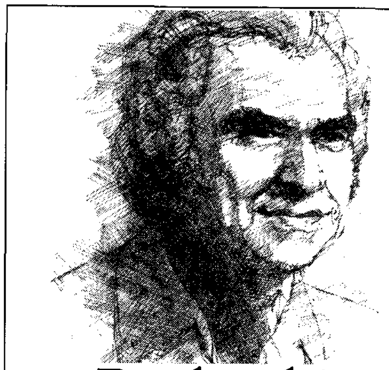
GLOVER IN CLOVER

It was nearly 11 P.M. by the time Savion Glover and four of his friends finished their extraordinary performance last week at the Delacorte Theatre, in Central Park, by leaping into a moat that is part of the set for "The Two Gentlemen of Verona." Kids danced in the aisles, and some were still dancing as they filtered back to the West Side in the balmy night air trying to imitate Glover's signature percussive moves—tapping on point, tapping with the outside of his foot and with a slap of his ankles. It was an explosive evening, and it seemed apt that the twenty-year-old Glover, the young teen-agers he'd trained, and Drummin' 2 Deep—the two street drummers who'd first beaten their innovative tattoo down the steps and seats of the theatre before taking the stage and attacking the plastic containers that served them splendidly as drums—should end the show with members of the audience bravoing on their feet and the performers chilling out in the water. People left the Park knowing they'd seen something special, and perhaps even something seminal both for the future of tap and for the American musical, which not only has been pricing new audiences out of the theatre but seems forever locked in the postures and rhythms of bygone days.



The evening included a couple of slick old-timers, James (Buster) Brown and Lon Chaney, whose self-abasing, jokey names were themselves a sign of an earlier era and whose gentle, fluid styles allowed the audience to bear witness to the athletic change that the streetwise Glover has wrought in his debased art. The old-timers worked the audience, but Glover, whose mother got him into tap dancing to keep him off the streets after school, hardly faced or addressed the assembled. In a T-shirt and with a raggedy new growth of beard, he looked either at the jazz combo perched just above him or at some invisible horizon that conveyed to him the fierce, fractious rhythms he stomped, slapped, and cajoled out of himself.

Glover is a kind of punk tapper, who makes no concessions to charm or humor. Onstage, he works himself into a kinetic trance and creates a complex staccato music. The tapping, like the drumming, has been stripped of its decoration and of the trappings of overproduction, so that its prowess can be viewed pure. It is in this virtuoso complexity that the show holds something new for the musical—a free-form, streamlined expression of the unmistakable brilliance of youth. The event, however modest, points to one way of getting the musical back to the source of its strength: the streets of the city. ♦



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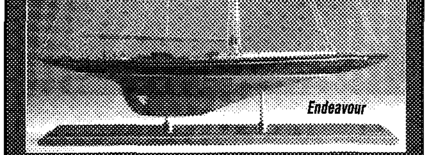

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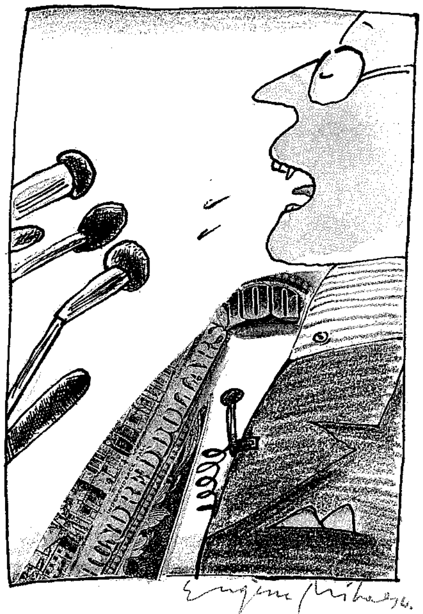
FEE SPEECH

Who, besides members of Congress, accepts money from special interests? Often, the journalists most eager to sneer at politicians for it.

BY KEN AULETTA

THE initial hint of anger from twenty-five or so members of the House Democratic leadership came on an hour-and-a-quarter-long bus ride from Washington to Airlie House, in rural Virginia, one morning last January. They had been asked by the Majority Leader, Richard A. Gephardt, of Missouri, to attend a two-day retreat for the Democratic Message Group, and as the bus rolled southwest the convivial smiles faded. The members of the group began to complain that their message was getting strangled, and they blamed the media. By that afternoon, when the Democrats gathered for the first of five panels composed of both partisans and what were advertised as "guest analysts, not partisan advisers," the complaints were growing louder. The most prominent Democrats in the House—Gephardt; the Majority Whip, David E. Bonior, of Michigan; the current Appropriations Committee chairman, David R. Obey, of Wisconsin; the Democratic Congressional Campaign chairman, Vic Fazio, of California; Rosa L. DeLauro, of Connecticut, who is a friend of President Clinton's; and about twenty others—expressed a common grievance: public figures are victims of a powerful and cynical press corps. A few complained of what they saw as the ethical obtuseness of Sam Donaldson, of ABC, angrily noting that, just four days earlier, "PrimeTime Live," the program that Donaldson co-anchors, had attacked the Independent Insurance Agents of America for treating congressional staff people to a Key West junket. Yet several months earlier the same insurance group had paid Donaldson a thirty-thousand-dollar lecture fee.



EUGÈNE MIHAESCO

By four-thirty, when the third panel, ostensibly devoted to the changing role of the media, was set to begin, the Democrats could no longer contain their rage, lumping the press into a single, stereotypical category—*you*—the same way they complained that the press lumped together *all* members of Congress.

They kept returning to Donaldson's lecture fees and his public defense that it was ethically acceptable for him to receive fees because he was a private citizen, not an elected official. The Airlie House meeting was off the record, but in a later interview Representative Obey recalled having said of journalists, "What I find most offensive lately is that we get the sanctimonious-Sam defense: 'We're different because we don't write the laws.' Well, they have a hell of a lot more power than I do to affect the laws written."

Representative Robert G. Torricelli, of New Jersey, recalled having said, "What startles many people is to hear television commentators make paid speeches to interest groups and then see them on television commenting on those issues. It's kind of a direct conflict of interest. If it happened in government, it would not be permitted." Torricelli, who has been criticized for realizing a sixty-nine-thousand-dollar profit on a New Jersey savings-and-loan after its chairman advised him to make a timely investment in its stock, says he doesn't understand why journalists don't receive the same scrutiny that people in Congress do. Torricelli brought up an idea that had been discussed at the retreat and that he wanted to explore: federal regulations requiring members of the press to disclose outside income—and most particularly television journalists, whose stations are licensed by the government. He said that he would like to see congressional hearings on the matter, and added, "You'd get the votes if you did the hearings. I predict that in the next couple of Congresses you'll get the hearings."

Gephardt is dubious about the legality of compelling press disclosure of outside income, but one thing he is sure about is the anger against the media which is rising within Congress. "Most of us work for more than money," he told me. "We work for self-image. And Congress's self-image has suffered, because, members think, journalistic ethics and standards are not as good as they used to be."

The press panel went on for nearly three hours, long past the designated cocktail hour of six. The congressmen directed their anger at both Brian Lamb, the C-SPAN chairman, and me—we were the two press representatives on the panel—and cited a number of instances of what they considered reportorial abuse. The question that recurred most often was this: Why won't journalists disclose the income they receive from those with special interests?

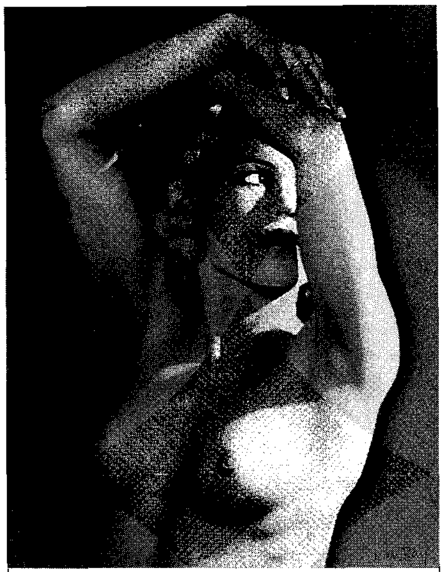
It is a fair question to ask journalists, who often act as judges of others' character. Over the summer, I asked it of more than fifty prominent media people, or perhaps a fifth of what can fairly be called the media élite—those journalists who, largely on account of television appearances, have a kind of fame similar to that of actors. Not surprisingly, most responded to the question at least as defensively as any politician would. Some of them had raised an eyebrow when President Clinton said he couldn't recall ten- or fifteen-year-old details about Whitewater. Yet many of those I spoke to could not remember where they had given a speech just months ago. And many of them, while they were unequivocal in their commentary on public figures and public issues, seemed eager to dwell on the complexities and nuances of their own outside speaking.

Sam Donaldson, whose annual earnings at ABC are about two million dollars, was forthcoming about his paid speeches: in June, he said that he had given three paid speeches so far this year and had two more scheduled. He would not confirm a report that he gets a lecture fee of as much as thirty thousand dollars. On being asked to identify the three groups he had spoken to, Donaldson—who on the March 27th edition of the Sunday-morning show "This Week with David Brinkley" had ridiculed President Clinton for not remembering that he had once lent twenty thousand dollars to his mother—said he couldn't remember. Then he took a minute to call up the information from his computer. He said that he had spoken at an I.B.M. convention in Palm Springs, to a group of public-information officers, and to the National Association of Retail Druggists. "If I hadn't consulted my computerized date book, I couldn't have told you that I spoke to the National Association of Retail Druggists," he said. "I don't remember these things."

What would Donaldson say to members of Congress who suggest that, like them, he is not strictly a private individual and should make full disclosure of his income from groups that seek to influence legislation?

"First, I don't make laws that govern an industry," he said. "Second, people hire me because they think of me as a celebrity; they believe their members or the people in the audience will be impressed." He went on, "Can you say the same thing about a member of Congress who doesn't even speak—who is hired, in a sense, to go down and play tennis? What is the motive of the group that pays for that?" He paused and then answered his own question: "Their motive, whether they are subtle about it or not, is to make friends with you because they hope that you will be a friend of theirs when it comes time to decide about millions of dollars. Their motive in inviting me is not to make friends with me."

Would he concede that there might be at least an appearance of conflict



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when he takes money from groups with a stake in, say, health issues?

Donaldson said, "At some point, the issue is: What is the evidence? I believe it's not the appearance of impropriety that's the problem. It's impropriety." Still, Donaldson did concede that he was rethinking his position; and he was aware that his bosses at ABC News were reconsidering their relaxed policy.

Indeed, one of Donaldson's bosses—Paul Friedman, the executive vice-president for news—told me he agreed with the notion that on-air correspondents are not private citizens. "People like Sam have influence that far exceeds that of individual congressmen," Friedman said, echoing Representative Obey's point. "We always worry that lobbyists get special 'access' to members of government. We should also worry that the public might get the idea that special-interest groups are paying for special 'access' to correspondents who talk to millions of Americans."

Unlike Donaldson, who does not duck questions, some commentators chose to say nothing about their lecturing. The syndicated columnist George Will, who appears weekly as a commentator on the Brinkley show, said through an assistant, "We are just in the middle of book production here. Mr. Will is not talking much to anyone." Will is paid twelve thousand five hundred dollars a speech, Alicia C. Shepard reports in a superb article in the May issue of the *American Journalism Review.*

ABC's Cokie Roberts, who, according to an ABC official, earns between five and six hundred thousand dollars annually as a Washington correspondent and is a regular commentator on the Brinkley show in addition to her duties on National Public Radio, also seems to have a third job, as a paid speaker. Among ABC correspondents who regularly moonlight as speakers, Roberts ranks No. 1. A person who is in a position to know estimates that she earned more than three hundred thousand dollars for speaking appearances in 1993. Last winter, a couple of weeks after the Donaldson-"PrimeTime" incident, she asked the Group Health Association of America, before whom she was to speak in mid-February, to donate her reported twenty-thousand-dollar fee to charity. Roberts did not return three phone calls—which suggests that she expects an openness from the Clinton Administration that she rejects for herself. On that March 27th Brinkley show, she described the Administration's behavior concerning Whitewater this way: "All of this now starts to look like they are covering something up."

Brit Hume, the senior ABC White House correspondent, earns about what Roberts does, and is said to trail only Roberts and Donaldson at ABC in lecture earnings. This could not be confirmed by Hume, for he did not return calls.

At CNN, the principal anchor, Bernard Shaw, also declined to be interviewed, and so did three of the loudest critics of Congress and the Clinton Administration: the conservative commentator John McLaughlin, who now takes his "McLaughlin Group" on the road to do a rump version of the show live, often before business groups; and the alternating conservative co-hosts of "Crossfire," Pat Buchanan and John Sununu.

David Brinkley did respond to questions, but not about his speaking income. Like Donaldson and others, he rejected the notion that he was a public figure. Asked what he would say to the question posed by members of Congress at the retreat, Brinkley replied, "It's a specious argument. We are private citizens. We work in the private marketplace. They do not."

And if a member of Congress asked about his speaking fee, which is reported to be eighteen thousand dollars?

"I would tell him it's none of his business," Brinkley said. "I don't feel that I have the right to ask him everything he does in his private life."

The syndicated columnist and television regular Robert Novak, who speaks more frequently than Brinkley, also considers himself a private citizen when it comes to the matter of income disclosure. "I'm not going to tell you how many speeches I do and what my fee is," he said politely. Novak, who has been writing a syndicated column for thirty-one years, is highly visible each weekend on CNN as the co-host of the "Evans & Novak" interview program and as a regular on "The Capital Gang."

What would Novak say to a member of Congress who maintained that he was a quasi-public figure and should be willing to disclose his income from speeches?

"I'm a totally private person," he said. "Anyone who doesn't like me doesn't have to read me. These people, in exchange for power—I have none—they have sacrificed privacy."

In fact, Novak does seem to view his privacy as less than total; he won't accept fees from partisan political groups, and, as a frequent critic of the Israeli government, he will not take fees from Arab-American groups, for fear of creating an appearance of a conflict of interest. Unlike most private citizens, Novak, and most other journalists, will not sign petitions, or donate money to political candidates, or join protest marches.

Colleagues have criticized Novak and Rowland Evans for organizing twice-a-year forums—as they have since 1971—to which they invite between seventy-five and a hundred and twenty-five subscribers to their newsletter, many of whom are business and financial analysts. Those attending pay hundreds of dollars—Novak refuses to say how much—for the privilege of listening to public officials speak and answer questions off the record. "You talk about conflicts of interest!" exclaimed Jack Nelson, the Los Angeles *Times* Washington bureau chief. "It is wrong to have government officials come to speak to businessmen and you make money off of it."

Mark Shields, who writes a syndicated column and is the moderator of "The Capital Gang" and a regular commentator on "The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour," is a busy paid lecturer. Asked how much he earned from speeches last year, he said, "I haven't even totalled it up." Shields said he probably gives one paid speech a week, adding, "I don't want, for personal reasons, to get into specifics."

Michael Kinsley, who is the liberal co-host of "Crossfire," an essayist for *The New Republic* and *Time*, and a contributor to *The New Yorker*, is also reluctant to be specific. "I'm in the worst of all possible positions," he said. "I do only a little of it. But I can't claim to be a virgin." Kinsley said he appeared about once every two months, but he wouldn't say what groups he spoke to or how much he was paid. "I'm going to do a bit more," he said. "I do staged debates—mini 'Crossfire's—before business groups. If everyone disclosed, I would."

The New Republic's White House correspondent, Fred Barnes, who is a regular on "The McLaughlin Group" and appears on "CBS This Morning" as a political commentator, speaks more often than Kinsley, giving thirty or forty paid speeches a year, he said, including the "McLaughlin" road show. How would Barnes respond to the question posed by members of Congress?

"They're elected officials," he said. "I'm not an elected official. I'm not in government. I don't deal with taxpayers' money."

Barnes's "McLaughlin" colleague Morton M. Kondracke is the executive editor of *Roll Call*, which covers Congress. Kondracke said that he gave about thirty-six paid speeches annually, but he would not identify the sponsors or disclose his fee. He believes that columnists have fewer constraints on their speech-making than so-called objective reporters, since columnists freely expose their opinions.

Gloria Borger, a *U.S. News & World Report* columnist and a frequent "Washington Week in Review" panelist, discloses her income from speeches, but only to her employer. Borger said she gave one or two paid speeches a month, but she wouldn't reveal her fee. "I'm not an elected official," she said.

Like Borger, Wolf Blitzer, CNN's senior White House correspondent, said that he told his news organization about any speeches he made. How many speeches did he make in the last year?

"I would guess four or five," he said, and repeated that each one was cleared through his bureau chief.

What would Blitzer say to a member of Congress who asked how much he made speaking and from which groups?

"I would tell him 'None of your business,'" Blitzer said.

Two other network chief White House correspondents—NBC's Andrea Mitchell and CBS's Rita Braver—also do little speaking. "I make few speeches," Mitchell said. "Maybe ten a year. Maybe six or seven a year. I'm very careful about not speaking to groups that involve issues I cover." She declined to say how much she earned. For Braver, the issue was moot. "I don't think I did any," she said, referring to paid speeches in the past year.

ABC's "PrimeTime Live" correspondent Chris Wallace, who has done several investigative pieces on corporate-sponsored congressional junkets, said he

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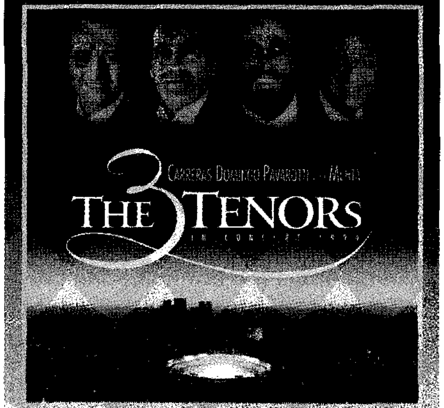

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made four or five paid speeches last year. "I don't know exactly," he said. Could he remember his fee?

"I wouldn't say," he replied.

Did he speak to business groups?

"I'm trying to remember the specific groups," he said, and then went on, "One was the Business Council of Canada. Yes, I do speak to business groups."

So what is the difference between Chris Wallace and members of Congress who accept paid junkets?

"I'm a private citizen," he said. "I have no control over public funds. I don't make public policy."

Why did Wallace think that he was invited to speak before business groups?

"They book me because they feel somehow that it adds a little excitement or lustre to their event," he said. He has been giving speeches since 1980, he said, and "never once has any group called me afterward and asked me any favor in coverage."

But isn't that what public officials usually say when Wallace corners them about a junket?

Those who underwrite congressional junkets are seeking "access" and "influence," he said, but the people who hire him to make a speech are seeking "entertainment." When I mentioned Wallace's remarks to Norman Pearlstine, the former executive editor of the *Wall Street Journal*, he said, "By that argument, we ought not to distinguish between news and entertainment, and we ought to merge news into entertainment."

ABC's political and media analyst Jeff Greenfield makes a "rough guess" that he gives fifteen paid speeches a year, many in the form of panels he moderates before various media groups—cable conventions, newspaper or magazine groups, broadcasting and marketing associations—that are concerned with subjects he regularly covers. "It's like 'Nightline,' but it's not on the air," he said. He would not divulge his fee, or how much he earned in the past twelve months from speeches.

Greenfield argued that nearly everything he did could be deemed a potential conflict. "I cover cable, but I cover it for ABC, which is sometimes in conflict with that industry," he said. Could he accept money to write a magazine piece or a book when he might one day report on the magazine publisher or the book industry? He is uneasy with the distinction that newspapers like the *Wall Street Journal* or the Washington *Post* make, which is to prohibit daily reporters from giving paid speeches to corporations or trade associations that lobby Congress and have agendas, yet allow paid college speeches. (Even universities have legislative agendas, Greenfield noted.) In trying to escape this ethical maze, Greenfield concluded, "I finally decided that I can't figure out everything that constitutes a conflict."

Eleanor Clift, of *Newsweek*, who is cast as the beleaguered liberal on "The McLaughlin Group," said that she made between six and eight appearances a year with the group. Her fee for a speech on the West Coast was five thousand dollars, she said, but she would accept less to appear in Washington. She would not disclose her outside speaking income, and said that if a member of Congress were to ask she would say, "I do disclose. I disclose to the people I work for. I don't work for the taxpayers."

Christopher Matthews, a nationally syndicated columnist and Washington bureau chief of the San Francisco *Examiner*, who is a political commentator for "Good Morning America" and co-host of a nightly program on America's Talking, a new, NBC-owned cable network, told me last June that he gave between forty and fifty speeches a year. He netted between five and six thousand dollars a speech, he said, or between two and three hundred thousand dollars a year. Like many others, he is represented by the Washington Speakers Bureau, and he said that he placed no limitations on corporate or other groups he would appear before. "To be honest, I don't spend a lot of time thinking about it," he said. "I give the same speech."

David S. Broder, of the Washington *Post*, who has a contract to appear regularly on CNN and on NBC's "Meet the Press," said that he averaged between twelve and twenty-four paid speeches a year, mostly to colleges, and that the speeches are cleared with his editors at the *Post*. He did not discuss his fee, but Howard Kurtz, the *Post's* media reporter, said in his recent book "Media Circus" that Broder makes up to seventy-five hundred dollars a speech. Broder said he would support an idea advanced by Albert R. Hunt, the *Wall Street Journal's* Washington editor, to require disclosure as a condition of receiving a congressional press card. To receive a press card now, David Holmes, the superintendent of the House Press Gallery, told me, journalists are called upon to disclose only if they receive more than five per cent of their income from a single lobbying organization. Hunt said he would like to see the four committees that oversee the issuing of congressional press cards—made up of five to seven journalists each—require full disclosure of any income from groups that lobby Congress. He said he was aware of the bitter battle that was waged in 1988, when one committee issued new application forms for press passes which included space for detailed disclosure of outside income. Irate reporters demanded that the application form be rescinded, and it was. Today, the *Journal*, along with the Washington *Post*, is among the publications with the strictest prohibitions on paid speeches. Most journalistic organizations forbid reporters to accept money or invest in the stocks of the industries they cover. But the *Journal* and the *Post* have rules against reporters' accepting fees from any groups that lobby Congress or from any for-profit groups.

Hunt, who has television contracts with "The Capital Gang" and "Meet the Press," said that he averaged three or four speeches a year, mostly to colleges and civic groups, and never to corporations or groups that directly petition Congress, and that he received five thousand dollars for most speeches.

William Safire, the *Times* columnist, who is a regular on "Meet the Press," was willing to disclose his lecture income. "I do about fifteen speeches a year for twenty thousand dollars a crack," he said. "A little more for overseas and Hawaii." Where Safire parts company with Hunt is that he sees nothing wrong with accepting fees from corporations. He said that in recent months he had spoken to A.T. & T., the Pharmaceuti-

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cal Research and Manufacturers of America, and Jewish organizations. Safire said that because he is a columnist his opinions are advertised, not hidden. "I believe firmly in Samuel Johnson's dictum 'No man but a blockhead ever wrote except for money,' " he went on. "I charge for my lectures. I charge for my books. I charge when I go on television. I feel no compunction about it. It fits nicely into my conservative, capitalist—with a capital 'C'—philosophy."

Tim Russert, the host of "Meet the Press," said that he had given "a handful" of paid speeches in the past year, including some to for-profit groups. He said that he had no set fee, and that he was wary of arbitrary distinctions that say lecturing is bad but income from stock dividends is fine. Russert also raised the question of journalists' appearing on shows like "Meet the Press," which, of course, have sponsors. "Is that a conflict? You can drive yourself crazy on this."

Few journalists drive themselves crazy over whether to accept speaking fees from the government they cover. They simply don't. But enticements do come from unusual places. One reporter, who asked to remain anonymous, said that he had recently turned down a ten-thousand-dollar speaking fee from the Central Intelligence Agency. A spokesman for the C.I.A., David Christian, explained to me, "We have an Office of Training and Education, and from time to time we invite knowledgeable non-government experts to talk to our people as part of our training program." Does the agency pay for these speeches? "Sometimes we do, and sometimes we don't," he said. Asked for the names of journalists who accepted such fees, Christian said that he was sorry but "the records are scattered."

Time's Washington columnist, Margaret Carlson, who is a regular on "The Capital Gang," laughed when I asked about her income from speeches and said, "My view is that I just got on the gravy train, so I don't want it to end." Carlson said she gave six speeches last year, at an average of five thousand dollars a speech, including a panel appearance in San Francisco before the American Medical Association (with Michael Kinsley, among others). She made a fair distinction between what she did for a fee and what Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen tried to do in 1987, when, as Senate Finance Committee chairman, he charged lobbyists ten thousand dollars a head for the opportunity to join him for breakfast once a month. "We are like monkeys who get up onstage," Carlson said, echoing Chris Wallace. "It's mud wrestling for an hour or an hour and a half, and it's over."

THERE are journalistic luminaries who make speeches but, for the sake of appearances, do not accept fees. They include the three network-news anchors—NBC's Tom Brokaw, ABC's Peter Jennings, and CBS's Dan Rather—all of whom say that they don't charge to speak or they donate their fees to charity. "We don't need the money," Brokaw said. "And we thought it created an appearance of conflict." Others who do not accept fees for speaking are Ted Koppel, of ABC's "Nightline"; Jim Lehrer, of "The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour"; Bob Schieffer, CBS's chief Washington correspondent and the host of "Face the Nation"; and C-SPAN's Brian Lamb.

ABC's senior Washington correspondent, James Wooten, explained how, in the mid-eighties, he decided to change his ways after a last lucrative weekend: "I had a good agent and I got a day off on Friday and flew out Thursday after the news and did Northwestern University Thursday night for six thousand dollars. Then I got a rental car and drove to Milwaukee, and in midmorning I did Marquette for five or six thousand dollars. In the afternoon, I went to the University of Chicago, to a small symposium, for which I got twenty-five hundred to three thousand dollars. Then I got on a plane Friday night and came home. I had made fifteen thousand dollars, paid the agent three thousand, and had maybe two thousand in expenses. So I made about ten thousand dollars for thirty-six hours. I didn't have a set speech. I just talked off the top of my head." But his conscience told him it was wrong. "It's easy money," Wooten said.

As for me, *The*

Bernard Schoenbaum

New Yorker paid my travel expenses to and from the congressional retreat. In the past twelve months, I've given two paid speeches: the first, at New York's Harmonie Club, was to make an opening presentation and to moderate a panel on the battle for control of Paramount Communications, for which I was paid twelve hundred dollars; the second was a speech on the future of the information superhighway at a Manhattan luncheon sponsored by the Baltimore-based investment firm of Alex. Brown & Sons, for which my fee was seventy-five hundred dollars. I don't accept lecture fees from communications organizations.

Like the public figures we cover, journalists would benefit from a system of checks and balances. Journalistic institutions, including *The New Yorker*, too seldom have rigorous rules requiring journalists to check with an editor or an executive before agreeing to make a paid speech; the rules at various institutions for columnists are often even more permissive. Full disclosure provides a disinfectant—the power of shame. A few journalistic institutions, recently shamed, have been taking a second look at their policies. In mid-June, ABC News issued new rules, which specifically prohibit paid speeches to trade associations or to any "for-profit business." ABC's ban—the same one that is in place at the *Wall Street Journal* and the Washington *Post*—prompted Roberts, Donaldson, Brinkley, Wallace, and several other ABC correspondents to protest, and they met in early August with senior news executives. They sought a lifting of the ban, which would allow them to get permission on a case-by-case basis. But a ranking ABC official says, "We can agree to discuss exceptions, but not give any. Their basic argument is greed, for Christ's sake!" Andrew Lack, the president of NBC News, said that he plans to convene a meeting of his executives to shape an entirely new speaking policy. "My position is that the more we can discourage our people from speaking for a fee, the better," he said. And CBS News now stipulates that all speaking requests must be cleared with the president or the vice-president of news. Al Vecchione, the president of MacNeil/Lehrer Productions, admitted in June to having been embarrassed by the *American Journalism Review* piece. "We had a loose policy," he said. "I just finished rewriting our company policy." Henceforth, those associated with the program will no longer accept fees to speak to corporate groups or trade associations that directly lobby the government. *The New Yorker*, according to its executive editor, Hendrik Hertzberg, is in the process of reviewing its policies.

Those who frequently lecture make a solid point when they say that lecture fees don't buy favorable coverage. But corruption can take subtler forms than the quid pro quo, and the fact that journalists see themselves as selling entertainment rather than influence does not wipe the moral slate clean. The real corruption of "fee speech," perhaps, is not that journalists will do favors for the associations and businesses that pay them speaking fees but that the nexus of television and speaking fees creates what Representative Obey called "an incentive to be even more flamboyant" on TV—and, to a lesser extent, on the printed page. The television talk shows value vividness, pithiness, and predictability. They prefer their panelists reliably pro or con, "liberal" or "conservative." Too much quirkiness can make a show unbalanced; too much complexity can make it dull. *Time's* Margaret Carlson told me, not entirely in jest, "I was a much more thoughtful person before I went on TV. But I was offered speeches only *after* I went on TV." Her *Time* colleague the columnist Hugh Sidey said that when he stopped appearing regularly on television his lecture income shrivelled. Obey wishes that it would shrivel for the rest of the pundit class as well. An attitude of scorn often substitutes for hard work or hard thought, and it's difficult to deny that the over-all result of this dynamic is a coarsening of political discourse.

Celebrity journalism and the appearance of conflicts unavoidably erode journalism's claim to public trust. "My view is that you're going to start having character stories about journalists," Jay Rosen, a journalism professor at New York University and the director of the Project on Public Life and the Press, told me recently. "It's inevitable. If I were a big-name Washington journalist, I'd start getting my accounts together. I don't think journalists are private citizens." ♦

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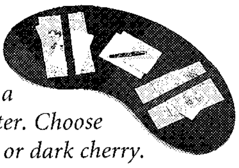

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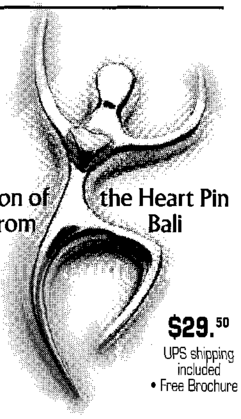

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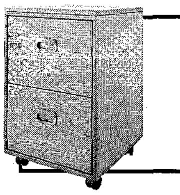

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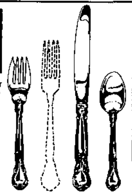

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LETTER FROM BANGLADESH

A FUGITIVE FROM INJUSTICE

The mullahs' anger has made Taslima Nasrin a potential martyr. Her own anger is making her a problematic heroine for libertarians and feminists.

BY MARY ANNE WEAVER

QUIETLY, and without notice, in the early-morning hours of August 9th the Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasrin was spirited through the empty streets of her country's capital, Dhaka, and put onto a plane. She was dressed in a black burka, which shrouded her, in the traditional Islamic style, from head to toe—something she found loathsome, she told me afterward. She eventually landed in Stockholm, where she remains, for all intents and purposes, in exile, living underground. Seemingly overnight, a young woman from the provinces—an unknown anesthesiologist in a government clinic—had become the newest victim of religious intolerance, threatened not only with death by Islamic militants but with what amounted to a blasphemy trial by a rattled government. And although former British India is a place where women have inherited dynastic power—Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh itself all have women prime ministers—it is doubtful whether any woman has ever so totally traumatized a country's political, religious, and literary life.

For the first time in Bangladesh, Taslima says, the fundamentalists have united three hundred thousand people on one issue—"the need for my death."

STEVEN DANA

Until 1993, Taslima was largely unknown outside a small circle of writers on the Indian subcontinent. Then a series of *fatwas*, or religious sanctions, and later the law courts, propelled her into prominence in the Western media. According to her critics, she is a self-promoting publicist who has damaged the cause of feminism in Bangladesh; according to her admirers, she is a genuinely talented poet with a message that must be told; according to the Indian writer Khushwant Singh, she is a brave woman but "a literary exhibitionist." She is clearly a woman who defies stereotypes, yet one senses that the role of public figure was not an easy one for her to adopt, and that she was never quite certain how to project herself. Much about her is simply anomalous. She is an Eastern fatalist by birth, a Marxist by conviction, a self-proclaimed atheist who often reflects on God. She is an introverted loner who craves the attention of the press. She frequently professes to hate men, yet she has always surrounded herself with them. In any case, she has brought contentious issues regarding women in the Islamic world boldly and directly to the fore.

One day in Dhaka, I watched a group of mullahs surging through the streets—bearded men, in large turbans, brandishing Korans. They were visible only sporadically as they were engulfed in a swelling crowd. Such demonstrations, in which thousands of fundamentalists took to the streets demanding Taslima's death, had become an almost daily occurrence this summer, and seemed particularly explosive on Fridays after midday prayers. As I looked down at the demonstrators from a balcony near the city's Central Mosque, they seemed a sea of flowing white prayer robes and caps as they flailed bamboo clubs, iron pipes, and machetes in the air. A number of the marchers had pythons and cobras coiled around their necks. They had threatened to release ten thousand snakes on the streets of Dhaka if Taslima Nasrin was not publicly hanged.

Taslima was born in 1962, in a small stucco house at a crossroads in Mymensingh, an upriver town in what was then East Pakistan—a strangely misconceived geographical entity that would later become Bangladesh. Her father, Dr. Rojab Ali, was a government physician, a bit of a mystic, I was told, and a practitioner of the Sufi tradition of Islam. Her mother, Edulara, was a devoutly religious woman who prayed much of the time and had no interest in mysticism at all. Except for a brief period when Dr. Ali served as a physician in a county jail, he and his family never left Mymensingh.

When I visited the area, I was struck by the beauty, and the isolation, of the water-laced countryside. Seventy per cent of Bangladesh is under water, and, as a result, many of its villages and towns—where eighty per cent of the country's population of a hundred and eighteen million live—are largely cut off from Dhaka, leading a life of their own. "Leaving aside Islam, this is a very conservative society," a Western diplomat told me. "And to most Bangladeshis Taslima's pronouncements"—collected in sixteen outspoken and often sexually explicit books—"are like the pronouncements of someone who has dropped in from Mars. She's not even part of the Dhaka or the provincial élite, but comes from this little town way up in the hills. Where on earth did she get these ideas?"

She left that town only with great reluctance, according to one of her friends, when she was reassigned to a government clinic in Dhaka, less than four years ago. She is a doctor by the choice of her family, and a novelist, columnist, and poet by her own. She's also a thrice-married feminist who has given voice to ideas never before expressed publicly in Bangladesh—a nation with a history of religious tolerance but a Muslim nation nonetheless. Strong, often startling challenges to Islamic taboos on the role of women, and on female sexuality, are an essential ingredient of her work. "Religion is the great oppressor, and should be abolished," she has frequently said. Even by Western standards, her views are radical and her poems daring, ripe with sexual imagery.

Most people who know her use stock phrases to describe her. "She's utterly ordinary," a friend of Taslima's—a Marxist professor and poet—told me. "Her power is not in her personality but in her pen," another friend said. A third person remarked, "She is either the bravest or the most foolish woman I've ever met."

When I arranged to meet Taslima in Stockholm, in late August, I wasn't at all certain what to expect. I had been told that her nerves were frayed, that too much was happening which she didn't understand, and that her English was slight. She had only rarely been interviewed in the language before, and no interpreter could be found. This would also be her first interview since she had gone underground.

We met at the home of a friend, and I was told that the location was not to be identified, since some seventy-five thousand Muslims were living in Sweden, a large number of them from Iran, and members of her security detail still feared that the death sentence against her could be internationalized. When she walked into the friend's living room, accompanied by two Swedish security guards, she proved to be smaller than I had expected, and far prettier than her photographs. She also looked younger than her thirty-two years. She was dressed in jeans, a salmon-colored Levi's shirt, and a large brown jacket; other than a hint of lipstick, she wore no makeup. She greeted me warmly but somehow warily, as the security guards closed the door.

After we had settled ourselves on two adjoining sofas, I asked her what it was like to live under a death sentence and to live underground.

She smiled shyly, then answered, in hesitant but articulate English, "You become anonymous. You can't walk on the

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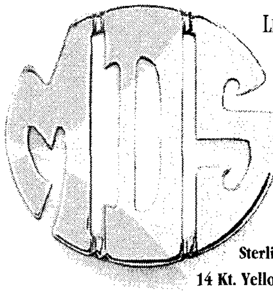

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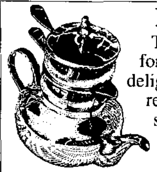

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streets, you can't go shopping, you can't go to bookshops, or even to the Book Fair. Before all this happened, I didn't go to the mosque, I didn't go to Islamic meetings, I didn't go to the cinema. That meant that I had no other choices—except for literature and art. Why *shouldn't* I go to the Book Fair? Yet even my progressive friends told me that I couldn't. That was in 1993, and at that time I knew I was alone. In the West, the money on my head is a small amount. In Bangladesh, twelve hundred and fifty dollars is a huge amount. You can give somebody two dollars to kill someone in Bangladesh. But perhaps what was most frightening to me was that my own government did nothing; it took no action against those who issued the *fatwas* against me."

Her voice was soft and quiet as she searched for words. Only her eyes betrayed the emotion that she must have felt. "I guess what I remember most about my life in hiding was the dark. I stayed in a dark room all the time—I moved ten times in two months, but all the rooms were small and dark. My friends used to lock the door; the window shades were drawn. I had no books, no pens or paper, no radio, no phone—only darkness. I wanted to see my family; my friends refused. I couldn't sleep at night, or during the day. I used to hear the chants of the fundamentalists outside on the streets—'Kill Taslima! Kill Taslima!' I was terrified. I was sure they would find me and chop me into pieces with their swords and knives."

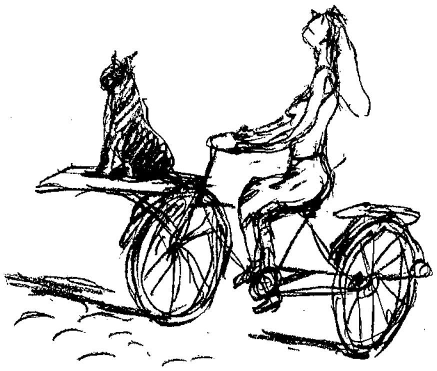
A TINY, steamy, overcrowded corner of the former British Empire, Bangladesh is the size of Wisconsin, with half the population of the United States. It has one of the world's highest population-density rates. Its per-capita gross national product, of two hundred and forty dollars a year, makes it one of the poorest nations in the world. It has suffered some of the world's greatest disasters—floods and cyclones, assassinations, coups and counter-coups. Yet it is not "a basket case," as Henry Kissinger once remarked. It is a nation that has always prided itself on not being rigidly Islamic, a patriarchal society where women are at the helm of political life. And its people, even in the smallest villages, consider themselves to be the custodians of one of Asia's great literary languages, and of eight hundred years of Bengali letters and culture, which are known to the Western world largely through the films of Satyajit Ray and the works of the modern poet and Nobel Prize winner Rabindranath Tagore. Bangladesh has more poets, writers, and artists than entrepreneurs.

According to officials of international aid agencies, who administer much of the critically needed two billion dollars in development assistance that Bangladesh receives each year, a steady, quiet infusion of education and social programs had just begun to help the country turn the corner—lowering its birth rate, educating girls, and providing employment opportunities for women (whose literacy rate remains frozen at fifteen per cent). And then the highly explosive, potentially lethal battle between Taslima Nasrin and the fundamentalists began.

A woman named Noorjehan Begum was, by most accounts, the daughter of a landless peasant—a twenty-one-year-old who, in January, 1993, after her first marriage was dissolved, married again. The local mullah, giving no reasons, declared that this second marriage was contrary to Islamic law. A few weeks later, just after dawn, she was led to an open field in a small village in the district of Sylhet—a stronghold of the fundamentalists—where a pit had been dug overnight. She was lowered into the pit and buried waist deep. Then, slowly and methodically, she was stoned—a hundred and one times. Her death horrified Dhaka's élite.

A few months later, in another village, another woman—also named Noorjehan—was tied to a bamboo stake after being condemned by a *fatwa* for adultery; she had abandoned her husband to elope with a neighbor, it was said. Kerosene was poured over her, and she was burned to death.

By 1993, use of the *fatwa* had travelled to the most remote hamlets of Bangladesh. It seemed that no areas were left untouched by the fundamentalists' ire. All over the countryside, women and nongovernmental organizations, or N.G.O.s, whose programs for women had begun transforming village life, came under attack, as they challenged the status quo, a hierarchical system over which mullahs and moneylenders had presided traditionally. The mullahs' particular targets were the Grameen Bank and the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, whose success with women's programs in the villages had earned international renown. In the first three months of this year, a hundred and ten BRAC schools were torched, and many of them burned to the ground. Women, as the focus of the efforts of the N.G.O.s, were the objects of the mullahs' wrath. Throughout the countryside, they were being humiliated, driven out of their villages, or pushed to suicide if they dared to leave their homes, whether to work, to remarry, or to go to school.



As the atrocities continued, Taslima began to make a name for herself as an advocate of social, legal, and religious reform. She had arrived in Dhaka in late 1990, and had been assigned to the gynecological department of a small hospital in a working-class neighborhood. Much of what she saw there, along with her earlier experiences in hospitals in Mymensingh, provided her with material for the harsh realism that became a defining characteristic of her work. She had already published small volumes of poetry, and now she began writing a syndicated newspaper column, mainly about the world she knew: about the oppression of women in the provinces, and religious intolerance. Her language was Swiftian and direct. Her readership consisted largely of women—and of fundamentalists.

Over the next year or so, her writing became increasingly stark and angry, making references to sexual organs, and featuring tirades against men and an uncompromising rejection of the status quo. The mullahs were enraged. In early 1992, angry mobs had begun attacking bookstores that carried her works; they also attacked her physically at the Dhaka Book Fair—she was more shaken than harmed—and destroyed a stall displaying her books.

The attacks served to embolden her, yet in her private life she remained curi-

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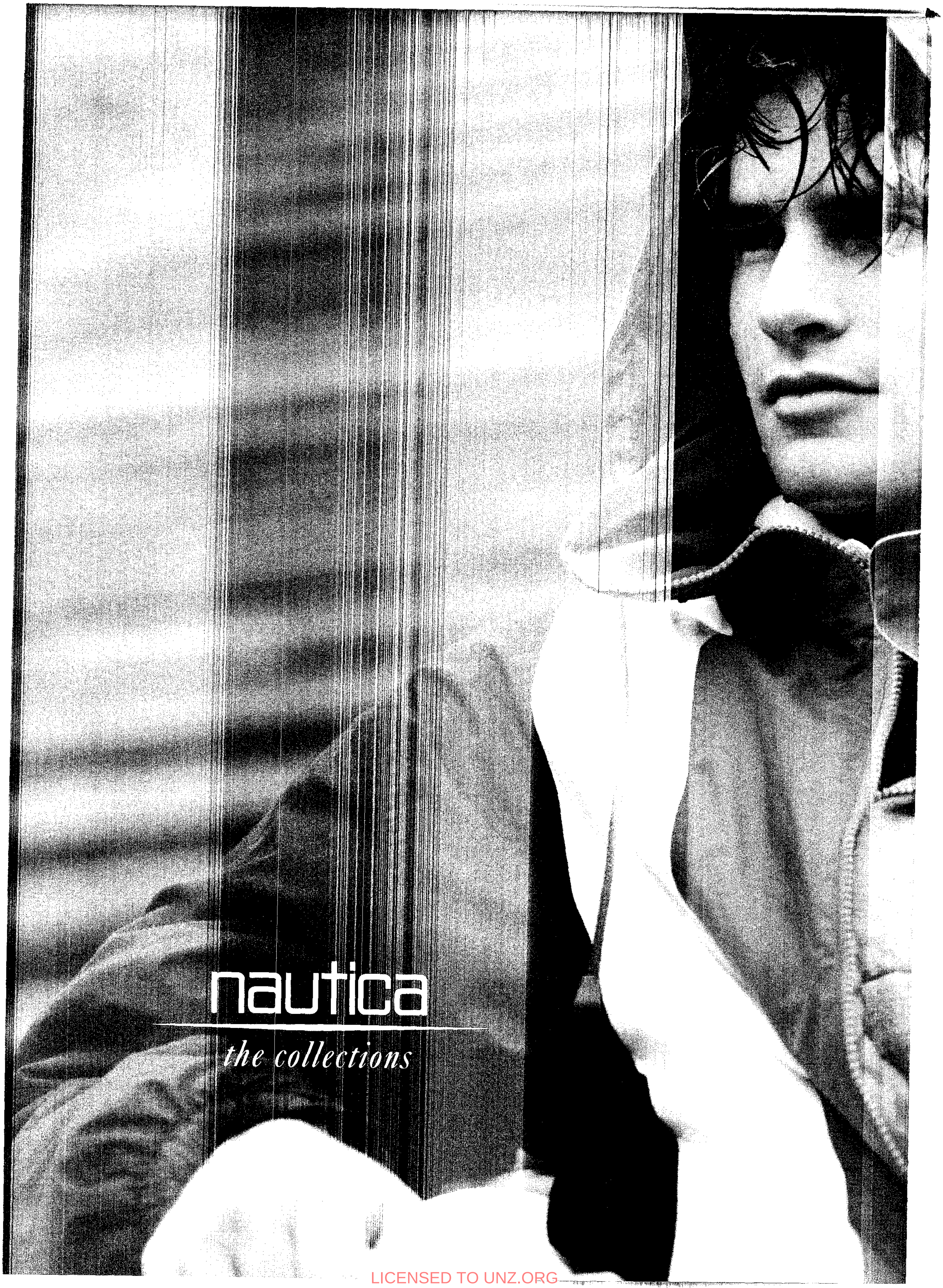
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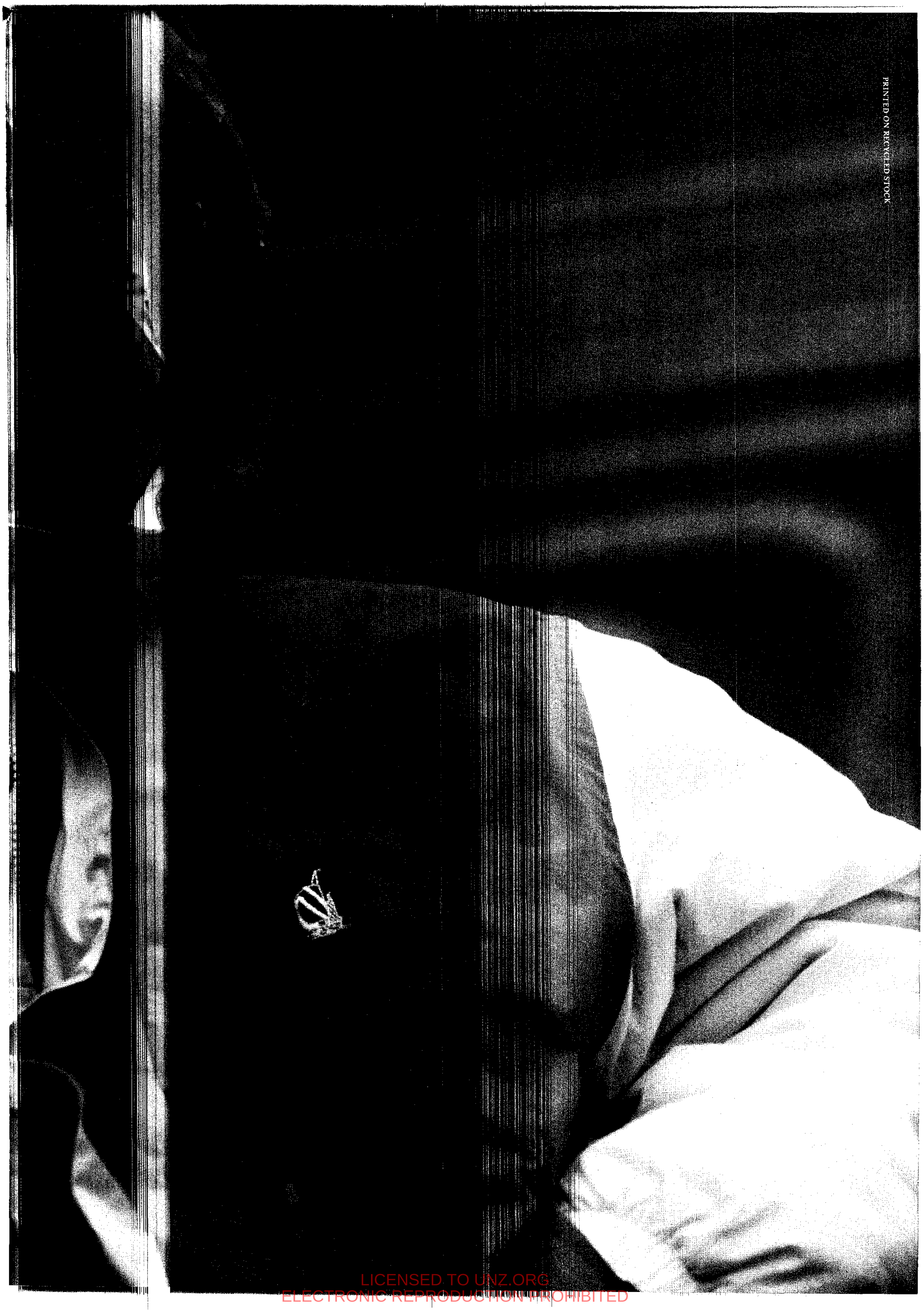

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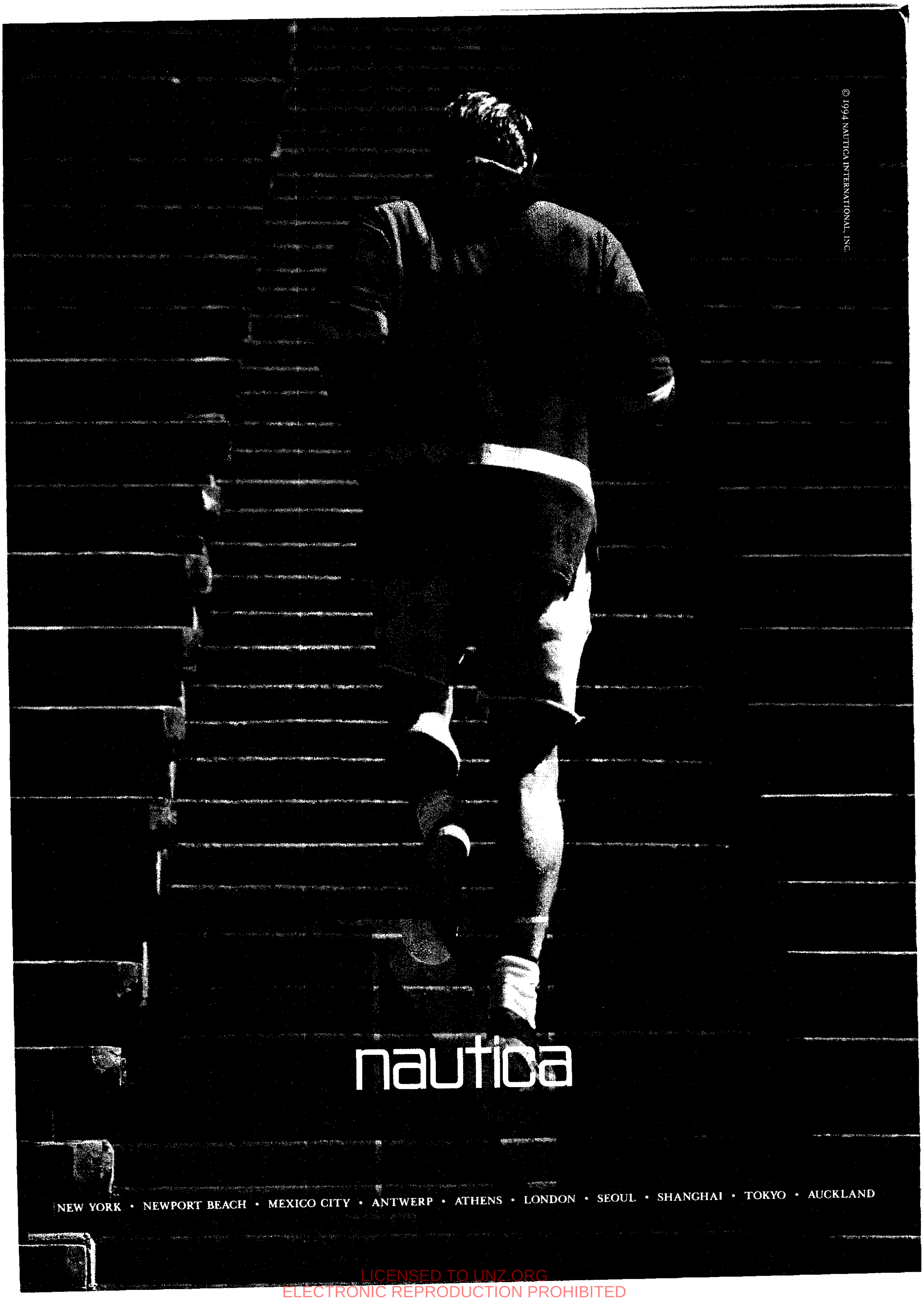
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so that if he wishes he can chain my feet
if he wishes, he can, with no qualms whatsoever,
use a whip on me
if he wishes, he can chop off my hands, my fingers.
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He wanted my heart under his control
so that I would love him:
in my lonely house at night,
sleepless, full of anxiety,
clutching at the window grille,
I would wait for him and sob.
My tears rolling down, I would bake homemade bread,
so that I would drink, as if they were ambrosia,
the filthy liquids of his polygynous body.
So that loving him, I would melt like wax,
not turning my eyes toward any other man,
I would give proof of my chastity all my life.
So that, loving him
on some moonlit night I would commit suicide
in a fit of ecstasy.

—TASLIMA NASRIN

(*Translated, from the Bengali, by Carolyne Wright and Mohammad Nurul Huda, with the author.*)

ously aloof—by her own account, lonely and shy. She had few contacts in Dhaka, and even fewer friends. She remained a provincial—"an iconoclast," another woman writer told me, "who was never part of things."

One of her editors says, "She's so shy it's painful. She doesn't speak much in group discussions. She sits there almost mute. I don't know if she fears talking, or if she's dumb. Then, when she writes, she does so in such a disarmingly direct way that everyone understands. But I cautioned her, from the beginning, not to write about Islam. She knows nothing about it! It was only a year or so ago that she began buying books on Islam and the Koran. I don't understand what drives her. She picks up issues and goes after them like a slightly demented terrier."

In quick succession in 1992—as the fundamentalists shouted "Whore!" and "Pornographer!" at her, and threatened her with anonymous letters and phone calls—Taslima received the Indian state of West Bengal's most distinguished literary award and began work on a novella, "Lajja" ("Shame"), which is a fictionalized account of the brutalization of a Hindu family by Islamic fundamentalists in Bangladesh after Hindu fanatics in India razed a sixteenth-century mosque. The book, published in February of 1993—only three months after the razing of the mosque—resulted in the first *fatwa* against her, issued by an obscure mullah in a northern provincial town, in the name of an obscure organization, the Soldiers of Islam.

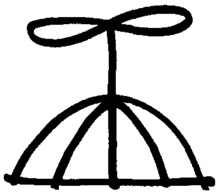
SEPTEMBER 24, 1993, was a beautiful late-summer day. The monsoon rains had ended. As Taslima, in her ninth-floor apartment overlooking central Dhaka, was glancing over a local newspaper, she was stopped—incredulous, she said—by a prominently featured notice calling for her death. A *fatwa* had been issued the night before by the Soldiers of Islam, at a public meeting in Sylhet. Eight days later, they would offer a bounty of twelve hundred and fifty dollars, and a few weeks after that another bounty was offered, then a third. The combined offerings were equal to twenty times the per-capita gross national product of Bangladesh.

Her passport had already been confiscated and "Lajja" banned, after selling an unprecedented sixty thousand copies in five months. Although it was almost universally a critical failure, in both India and Bangladesh it was nevertheless an immense commercial success. Hindu fundamentalists from India's Bharatiya Janata Party circulated thousands of pirated copies and lionized Taslima in the streets—anyone who exposed Muslim excesses was their natural ally. Muslim fundamentalists in Bangladesh, on the other hand, burned hundreds of copies and called for her death. In a sense, she seemed to have become both a creation of and a vehicle for religious extremists across the Indian subcontinent.

That October, International PEN began waging an exhaustive campaign on her behalf; it enlisted the support of Amnesty International and a number of other human-rights organizations and women's organizations from around the world. Western governments—most notably those of Sweden, Norway, the United States, France, and, later, Germany—came to PEN's assistance by lodging protests with the government of Bangladesh. They demanded—in polite, diplomatic parlance—that Taslima Nasrin's passport be restored and that legal action be taken against those who had issued the *fatwas*. Sweden and Norway ultimately threatened to cut off all economic assistance. Seemingly overnight, Taslima had become the Western world's symbol of freedom of expression and of women's rights, in opposition to the rise of religious intolerance.

The government was dumbfounded by the world's outcry. It returned Taslima's passport, yet, fearful of an even greater fundamentalist backlash, it did nothing to restrain the increasingly angry mullahs, making no move to bring them to trial for issuing *fatwas* against Taslima and women like Noorjehan, which is a punishable offense under Bangladeshi law. The government had come to power with the aid of the Jama'at-i-Islami, the largest militant fundamentalist group in Bangladesh, and the *fatwas* remained intact.

Taslima left for Paris in the last days of April to address a seminar. Except for a few short trips to India, it was the first time she had travelled abroad. But she had now entered a world of literary giants, and many of them came to her defense, including Salman Rushdie and, later, Milan Kundera and Günter Grass—writers whom she had never previously read. PEN and Amnesty International and Western governments, from Washington to Stockholm, breathed a sigh of relief, congratulated one another, and went back to other tasks. The relief did not last long, however; in less than two weeks, Taslima was in trouble again. She left Paris early, and flew directly to Calcutta, just across the border from Bangladesh. There she told the English-language daily *Statesman*, according to the newspaper's account, that "the Koran should be revised thoroughly," and added, almost as an afterthought, that women activists in Bangladesh—who, at some risk to themselves, had earlier spoken out in her behalf—played limited roles, and were only too happy to live as housewives, faithfully following Islam's Shariat law.



Everyone—the activists and the housewives, Amnesty International and PEN, the American State Department and the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs—was outraged. Yet it was almost as though Taslima couldn't help herself. Subsequently, in an open letter to the Indian and Bangladeshi press, she denied making the reported remarks, but her denial struck the already outraged as even more provocative than those initial remarks, for in it she wrote that "the Koran, the Vedas, the Bible and all such religious texts" were "out of place and out of time." The clear implication was that they should all be abolished, not revised.

In Bangladesh, fundamentalists took to the streets by the tens of thousands in a frenzy. What had begun as a minor, if nettlesome, incident was assuming the form of a major political crisis. The government appeared paralyzed; it dithered, seeming to have no idea of what to do. It was already severely weakened by political dissent; three months earlier, the opposition had marched out of Parliament, demanding the installation of a caretaker government that would hold elections by the end of the year. The Army, which ruled Bangladesh for fifteen of its twenty-three independent years, was said to be concerned.

Then, on June 4th, the government brought charges against Taslima, under a rarely used nineteenth-century statute outlawing acts that could inflame religious or communal sensitivities. That move served only to further polarize Bangladesh's political life. Secularists viewed the government's seeming acquiescence as a cause for alarm. The fundamentalists, sensing an opportunity, used the Taslima affair to broaden their agenda of political demands. They began clamoring for, among other things, a blasphemy law that would carry a sentence of death or life imprisonment; the expulsion of foreign aid organizations; and the introduction of Shariat law into the courts.

In a sense, the government appeared to be fuelling the fundamentalist flame. It owned the country's wire service, and so not only had permitted Taslima's interview with the *Statesman* to be circulated on the wire, and published throughout Bangladesh, but had allowed the *fatwas* to be given prominence in the domestic press. And, in the general chaos that now prevailed, it seemed almost oblivious of the nuances of its case against Taslima: her alleged offense was committed in a foreign country, in a foreign language, and would perhaps never have been known in Bangladesh if it had not been translated into Bengali and published in the government-supported press.

The day after the charges were filed, a warrant was issued for Taslima's arrest, and she left her apartment and went underground. For the next two months, she never saw daylight. Meredith Tax, the chair of the Women Writers' Committee of International PEN, remembers a tiny, quiet voice in a call that came this June, in the middle of the night: "Please save me, Meredith. They are going to kill me."

In retrospect, it is difficult to say which came first—Taslima's increasing provocations or the fundamentalists' rise. In effect, they fed each other, and all the Bangladeshis I talked with agreed that, intentionally or not, Taslima had become an Islamic lightning rod. Her aggressive attacks and her confrontational style had seemed to backfire: by challenging the mullahs, she seemed to encourage them; by challenging the Koran and Shariat law, she seemed to strengthen them. She provided the fundamentalists with an issue on which they could unite and mobilize mass appeal.

Without question, Taslima is one of the boldest writers that the Indian subcontinent has produced in many years, but her literary significance—which Bangladeshis are now discussing and debating endlessly—is far less clear. She is known primarily as a journalist, and though her columns gained her her following in Bangladesh, her real talent is for poetry; her novels and novellas—which she usually produces in a week to ten days—are, perhaps not surprisingly, breathless and impulsive, paying scant attention to language or form. She may be, in a sense, more of a social phenomenon and a cause than a writer.

As it happens, *fatwas* have also been issued against at least four other Bangladeshi writers and poets in the last two years, including the eighty-two-year-old poet laureate, Begum Sofia Kamal. None of those four, however, as the Begum told me one morning over tea, ever publicized their plight; they simply ignored the *fatwas* and got on with their lives.

"The West wanted a female Salman Rushdie, an Islamic heroine, and you got it," I was told by Shafik Rehman, the respected editor of the weekly *Jai Jai Din*, which published Taslima's syndicated column and some of her other works. "The fundamentalists needed a symbol, the West needed a symbol, and Taslima was the demarcation line. On both sides,

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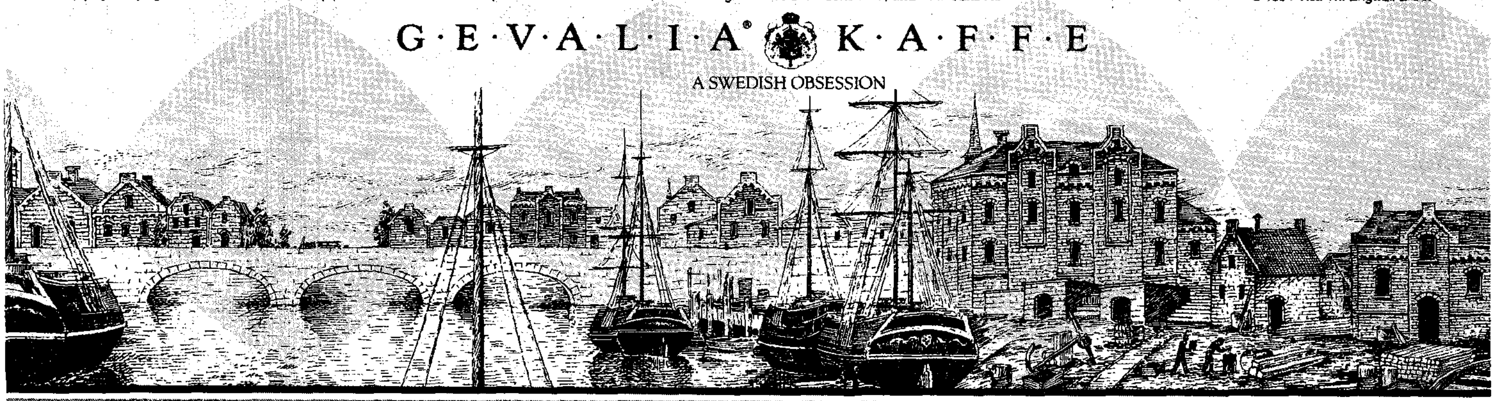


she was catapulted into a political—not a literary—sky. It was the political situation in this country which allowed this to happen. But, that being said, Taslima is a naturally gifted poet, and is one of only two or three writers in Bangladesh who can live by their writing."

This in itself may partly explain why so few other Bangladeshi writers—or women's activists—came to Taslima's defense and why those who did displayed a certain apathy and ambivalence. Some were stunned by her sudden fame; some were suspicious and jealous of her celebrity in India; and some genuinely believed that her writing lacked literary merit. Women's activists were also ambivalent, worrying that Taslima had set their movement back.

"Perhaps her irresponsibility is part of her youth," suggested Khushi Kabir, a formidable woman herself, who has spent a number of years working on women's programs in the countryside and knows the political landscape well. "Taslima went for the jugular, and we're not ready for that. There's simply too much at stake. You have to learn how to deal with the situation—how to handle the bearded ones. And that is something that Taslima never understood."

After Taslima went into hiding, the government alerted the country's border-crossing points, airports, and ports to prevent her escape, and mobilized hundreds of security men and police. But the search was highly incompetent—perhaps deliberately so. Most Bangladeshis found it inconceivable that she could not be traced, and thought it obvious that the government did not want to find her, because of the political dilemma she continues to represent: enforcing her arrest would upset libertarians, and allowing her freedom would be anathema to the fundamentalists. So on August 3rd, following more than three months of negotiations between her legal advisers, Western ambassadors, and the government, she appeared, grim and nervous, before Bangladesh's highest court and was granted bail—a ruling that had clearly been prearranged.

Then, with grave misgivings, and on the verge of tears, she boarded a plane and was flown to Sweden.

IN Stockholm, Taslima told me, "This is the first time ever, in the history of Bangladesh, that the fundamentalists have been able to unite three hundred thousand people on one issue—the need for my death. If they kill me, O.K., but what about the future of Bangladesh? They'll kill all progressive forces, all progressive thought. All enlightenment will stop."

She paused for a moment, and her eyes studied the room. Then she went on, "This is a political movement; it has nothing to do with religion. Our country is so poor, so backward, and the fundamentalists are trying to give young people a dream—a dream of a life without suffering and poverty. But they're also killing people in the name of God. If they really believed in God, they couldn't kill. They only use the name of God."

"Some of your friends have suggested that you're really quite religious yourself," I said.

She smiled before replying. "Did they give you proof?" she asked. Then she said, "I've seen many religious people, like my mother. They're afraid of God. They obey God because, they say, if they don't God will punish them later. That's not my kind of God. So"—she spoke with an air of finality—"I became an atheist when I was eleven or twelve."

"What happened?"

"I'll tell you another day. My lawyers have told me, Close your big mouth about religion; zip it shut. Otherwise, they'll leave me."

"Did you say that the Koran should be revised?"

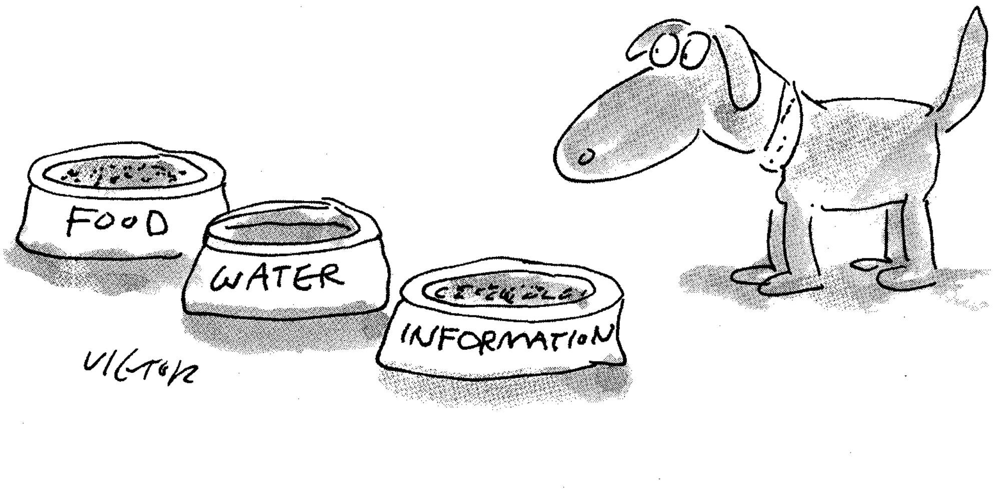
"No," she wailed. "How many times do I have to say it? I've said it over and over again. I said that Shariat law should be revised. I want a modern, civilized law, where women are given equal rights. I want no religious law that discriminates, none, period—no Hindu law, no Christian law, no Islamic law. Why should a man be entitled to have four wives? Why should a son get two-thirds of his parents' property when a daughter can inherit only a third?"

She fell silent, then turned toward me and asked, almost as though she were talking about someone else, "Should I be *killed* for saying this?"

She left the room to look into a nearby office, where faxes were coming in—offers for book and movie deals, translations, and interview requests. When she returned, I had the feeling that she was overwhelmed. Her mood changed perceptibly as we continued to talk, and her shyness gave way. She smiled, even laughing from time to time, but often her face wore a melancholy look. Her demeanor was at once that of a schoolgirl and that of what she evidently perceived to be a lone crusader, furious at being betrayed.

"I am not the female Salman Rushdie, and I don't like that label at all," she said. "We're very different: he has a huge *fatwa* on his head—more than two million dollars. Mine is very small compared to his. But the risk is the same. I respect Rushdie as a writer—he's very powerful. But he's repented, he's become a born-again Muslim, and that I don't respect. I will never be like him. I will never repent."

Resting her head on her hand, she went on to say that after the *Statesman* article nobody in Bangladesh had really come to her defense: "Not the progressives, not my fellow-writers, not our so-called women's activists. Only a few artists came to visit me when I was living underground. They were fearful and confused—they were cowards." She stopped, and then said, "If the progressive forces in our country don't unite, if they don't stand up to the fundamentalists, then there's no ques-



tion the fundamentalists will have won."

"But many people say that through your confrontational style you have served only to provoke the fundamentalists, and that now that has begun to backfire," I said.

She paused before she responded, and I could tell that she was angry even before she spoke. "Religion is not the exclusive property of the fundamentalists," she said. "I have the *right* to speak. Many of the so-called progressive writers in our country think we should do nothing to give the fundamentalists an issue to shout about, so they keep their mouths shut. Why shouldn't I write about what I've seen? I'm a doctor, remember." Her voice began to rise. "Do you know what it's like to see a woman crying out in the delivery room when she gives birth to a girl, terrified that her husband will divorce her? To see the ruptured vaginas of women who've been raped? The six- and seven-year-olds who have been violated by their fathers, brothers, and uncles—by *their own families*? No, I will not keep quiet. I will continue to speak out about these women's wretched lives."

She said that she wanted a cigarette, so, since our host didn't smoke, we went out of the apartment into the hallway of the building, accompanied by the guards. We sat on the floor and through an open window looked out at the steeples and spires of the Old Town of Stockholm below.

"Was that when you first became angry—as a doctor?" I asked.

"No," Taslima answered. "I think I've been angry all my life. It began as a child. From the moment I entered puberty, I couldn't leave the house. My father, who was more liberal than most, kept me locked away; my brothers escorted me to school, then came and picked me up. I was not permitted to do anything that they were permitted to do. I was, in a way, in a purdah of my own. It was not until I was in medical school that I even went to the river, and even then I had to do it secretly, with a girlfriend. Mymensingh is a small town, but it was a world for me—a forbidden world. I used to go to the cinema secretly—my family didn't know. But it was mostly the river that drew me. I used to sit on the riverbank, or sneak aboard the boats—to see nature, the river, and the sky. My first published poem was called 'I Want to Go'—'I want to go and have the wings to fly on the

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clouds of the sky.' " She drew on her cigarette, and went on, "In my columns and my poetry, again and again, I go back to Mymensingh—to my childhood and the river. I've written about it a hundred times. I don't know why. Yes, sometimes I suffer from nostalgia, yet it wasn't a particularly happy time when I was young. I always felt alone.

"When I started writing, I'd never read a book on feminism. I've had no experience with feminists at all. Later, much later—last year, I think it was—I read a few chapters of Simone de Beauvoir's 'The Second Sex' and Virginia Woolf's 'A Room of One's Own.' "

I asked her when she had met her first non-Bengali.

"Last year," she said.

TASLIMA'S provincialism is two-edged, as I had learned when I visited Mymensingh in July and found an old British jute station that has become a rambling town—a chaotic mixture of pungent bazaar, Marxist writers, mosques and mullahs, and unpaved streets and tiny lanes crowded with bicycle rickshaws. At Taslima's family home—a two-story, whitewashed bungalow—a lone guard stood at somewhat imperfect attention in the middle of the lawn. (Taslima herself was still in hiding in the capital.) Six or seven other security guards, whom the government had agreed to provide after the house was attacked earlier in the summer by frenzied mobs, lounged on mattresses in a foyer within. They didn't inspire confidence. Some were dressed only in their underwear, and their antique .303-calibre Lee Enfield rifles were stacked haphazardly in a corner against the wall.

"One lakh taka"—about twenty-five hundred dollars—"is the price for my daughter's head," Dr. Rojab Ali told me as he greeted me at the door. He looked pale and spoke without emotion, in a flat, subdued tone. A man of medium height and late middle years who had recently retired from a professorship at Mymensingh Medical College, he was now in private practice as an internist. Three times in as many weeks, he told me, his clinic had been attacked by Islamic mobs. "I'm proud of my daughter and of her courage," Dr. Ali said. "She speaks the truth. And if death comes I have no grounds to object to it; she will stand for the truth and will have died an honorable death."

"What was it about Mymensingh that caused Taslima to rebel?" I asked.

"Women are sold here for taka, for *money!*" Dr. Ali responded. "Men are encouraged to beat their wives. We had a relative, a *pir*, a learned Sufi holy man, who issued *fatwas* to prevent our women from leaving the house—*fatwas* against his *own family*—for years. He declared me an apostate who would burn in Hell, along with my entire family, including Taslima." After a moment, Dr. Ali added, "She was only nine years old."

Taslima would have been nine in 1971, the year of the liberation war, when a Bengali autonomy movement galvanized what was then East Pakistan, championing the cause of Bengali language and culture over the forces of Islam; it provoked a brutal crackdown by the Pakistani Army—aided by Islamic fundamentalists in East Pakistan. As a result, the Indian Army moved across the frontier. In December, East Pakistan, backed by India, became the independent nation of Bangladesh.

"Does Taslima have any memories of the war?" I asked Dr. Ali.

He didn't answer immediately. Then he said, "She saw me tortured by Pakistani soldiers, accompanied by mullahs, here in this house."

NOW, in Sweden, I asked Taslima about her childhood.

"Your father told me about a *pir*, a relative of yours," I began.

"He was mad," she said. "An Old Testament religion is what he preached. My mother used to take me to his house. He used to sit in a very comfortable place. His supporters surrounded him, reading their religious books. Women were behind a partition, a screen. There were many young women there; he always liked young girls. He would tell us that we should never get married, that the world would be destroyed and we would go on to a new life—that we would go before God, and he would punish us. Religion was punishment; religion was sanctions. The *pir*, the war of liberation—it all happened at once."

She stopped to light another cigarette, and told her guards to go downstairs. I asked her about her memories of the liberation war.

She didn't answer immediately. Then she said, "I remember one scene. Suddenly, at midnight, a group of Pakistani soldiers burst into our house and dragged my father out. They bound him by rope to a coconut tree and bayonetted him. Then they came into my room. I was just starting to close my eyes, and the room was dark. They lit their torch, and they saw me. I was terrified. I froze. I heard that they were taking women away and raping them. They whispered to each other, and I heard one of them say, 'She's too young. She will give us no pleasure.' So I was saved that night. I was only nine. But the next morning I saw the other girls coming back to the neighborhood. They were sixteen, seventeen, eighteen. Their clothes were torn, and they were covered with dirt and blood. One of them was my friend. She was crying. She was only twelve."

"Did you write about this?" I asked.

"No," she said. "But I wrote another poem—on how a child was sexually abused. It came from another memory." She leaned back against the wall, pulling her knees to her chin. Her eyes misted over, and she spoke rhythmically, as though she were in a trance. "It's about a nine-year-old girl and a mad old man. It's called 'The House of Shashikanta,' the king's house"—an old Moghul palace—"near my home in Mymensingh, and this is what it says: 'I wanted to see the king's house, and my uncle said, "Yes, you must see it," and he took my hand. We walked in many directions, and finally reached a small house. I wondered, Why is the king's house like this—a damp, dark room that is dirty? I saw a mouse there. "Where is the king's house?" I asked. "This is the king's house," the old man said. "Now open your panties and lie on the bed." I wondered, If I want to see the king's house, should I open my panties—is this the rule?' The last two lines of the poem went: 'The man came onto my little body, and thrust himself in. When I was fifteen, I went to see the king's house alone. If you want to see the king's house, you should always go alone.' "

She extinguished her cigarette on the floor and began rocking back and forth. Then she finally said, "Do you think that I'll ever be able to go back?"

I said that I didn't know.

"They've taken everything from me," she said. "My innocence, my youth, now my freedom. I know if I ever go back I'll have to keep silent, stay inside my house. I'll never lead a normal life in my country, until my death." ♦

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Financial World
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Foreign Policy
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Games Premium Puzzles
Geographical Information Systems
GPS World
Growing Edge
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ANNALS OF ADVERTISING

THIS VODKA HAS LEGS

By law, vodka is a distilled beverage that has no distinctive color, aroma, or taste. How do you sell that? Absolut did it with a campaign that stole the market. Then, in an industry shakeup, the team behind Absolut was faced with creating a second perfect pitch—this time for Stolichnaya, the rival brand it had humiliated.

BY ARTHUR LUBOW

FOR its first formal presentation to the client since it won the Stolichnaya account six weeks before, the Margeotes, Fertitta, Donaher & Weiss advertising agency showed up in force. The two men and two women who arrived at the offices of Carillon Importers, in Teaneck, New Jersey, on the morning of May 12th were led by George Fertitta, the agency's president and co-founder. Christine MacMaster, an account executive, who was the junior member of the squad, unwrapped the presentation materials as Fertitta and his partner, Paul Donaher, chatted with the client—Michel Roux, the president and chief executive officer of Carillon. Paula Brooks, the media-services director at Margeotes, was a little nervous and didn't say much. "For a media buyer," she explained later, "presenting to Michel is like presenting to God."

Hardly godlike in appearance, Roux is a beetle-browed man in his mid-fifties, with a high, wrinkled forehead and a bean-sack body. That morning, he was wearing a beige suit and a blue shirt with French cuffs, and his tie matched a pocket square that partly hid a cigar. He has a Charles Boyer accent, a flirtatious manner, and a mischievous, satisfied grin. Perhaps he is the god of whimsy. A large green ceramic elephant's head surveyed the proceedings from one wall of Carillon's wood-panelled conference room. Also looking on were Carillon's marketing-communications manager, Patricia Barroll, and Ernie Capria, its director of marketing services.

Fertitta, a trim, sandy-haired, highly caffeinated man in his late forties, began his spiel as soon as MacMaster had lined up the first series of "comps," or provisional ads, mounted on black cardboard. The Stolichnaya account consists of three different brands of vodka, of which the original Stolichnaya brand, referred to by all as Stoli, is the most important. Fertitta showed the Stoli comps first. They were posters in the Soviet Constructivist style of the nineteen-twenties, of planes and ships, of people shouting or dancing, all in bright colors and agitated contrasts. A bottle of Stoli, with the familiar red-white-and-gold label, was conspicuous in each merry scene. Stencilled on top of every painting was the phrase "Freedom of Vodka," in capital letters with dripping edges.

"We thought that it would be much more interactive if it felt like it was stencilled by a propagandist," Fertitta said.

"These are all young artists from Russia?" Roux asked. He pronounced it "Roux-sha."

Fertitta said that they were. "We saw twelve artists and thought we'd start with six," he explained. "These all have a very prominent bottle and an expression of energy."

"One of the things that we really think we have going for us with 'Freedom of Vodka' is the notion of emotionality," Donaher said.

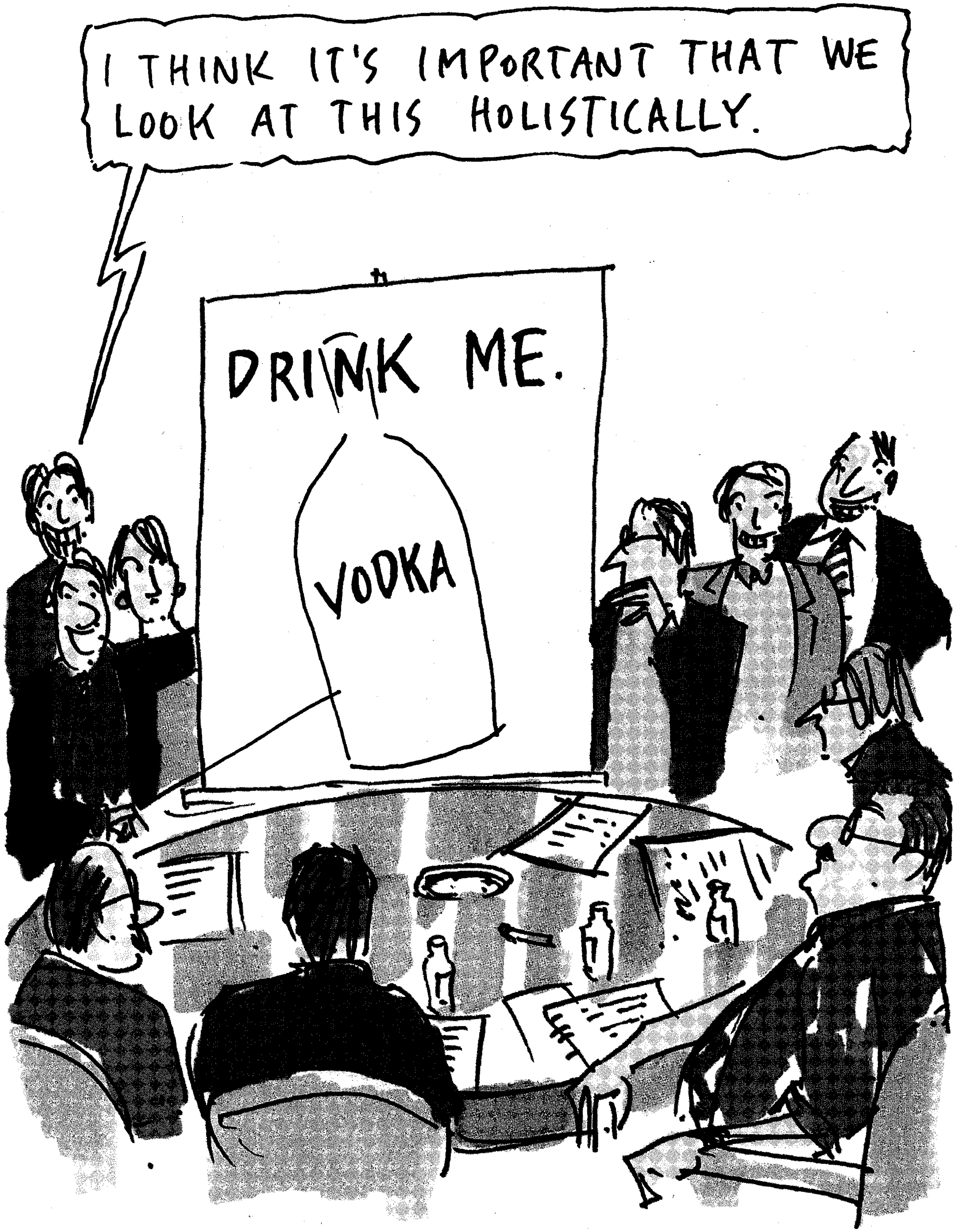
"Most liquor products appeal to the mind, and we want to go right to the gut," Fertitta said.

Roux said that he would like to produce lithographs of the posters, to be sold for charity. He looked closely at the comps. "It's vibrant," he said, "and I think when we get to the final work it's going to—*pssh!* It's going to jump. I think we're going to have a terrific thing, which has legs." A campaign with legs is one that can run for a long time.

Roux hoped that "Freedom of Vodka" would do more than evoke Russia—the source of Stolichnaya vodka—as a liberated land. The wit of the line lay in its double message—its suggestion to consumers that they have the freedom to select an imported premium vodka other than the one they have been drinking, which is to say Absolut. Almost two-thirds of the premium vodka consumed in the United States is the Swedish brand Absolut, and behind that statistic lies one of the great marketing triumphs of the nineteen-eighties. When Absolut was introduced into this country, in 1979, Stoli dominated the premium-vodka market with an eighty-per-cent share. Fifteen years later, Absolut is the colossus, and Stoli limps on, with twenty-one per cent of sales in the premium category. The Absolut ad campaign depicting a distinctive short-necked, clear-glass bottle and using the brand name as a modifier in a two-word headline ("Absolut Perfection," "Absolut Hollywood") is legendary, a landmark in advertising history. There are many people who rightfully claim some credit for Absolut's success, but the one person most closely associated with Absolut, the mastermind of the campaign, is Michel Roux.

The reason he is now captaining the rival he defeated is that last October, in a move that astonished people in both the liquor and the advertising industries, Vin & Sprit, the Swedish state-owned producer of Absolut, withdrew the American distribution rights to the brand from Roux's Carillon and awarded them to Seagram. Carillon, which is owned by the British conglomerate Grand Metropolitan, faced extinction. Then, in January, PepsiCo, which controls the North American rights to Stolichnaya, gave the brand to Carillon

DRAWINGS BY MICHAEL CRAWFORD


I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT THAT WE LOOK AT THIS HOLISTICALLY.
DRINK ME.
VODKA

to distribute, and Roux was back in business. Since Roux's old advertising agency, TBWA, had kept the Absolut account, he chose Margeotes as the agency for Stolichnaya. In an office recently stripped of hundreds of pieces of Absolut art, he was overseeing what he hoped would be Stolichnaya's rebirth. This meeting in May was meant to be a milestone on the long road back.

Once the "Freedom of Vodka" ads were packed up, the Margeotes delegation unveiled its comps for a lower-priced brand, Priviet, which Stolichnaya introduced in 1989.

"For Priviet, we're trying to make an unconventional, alternative vodka," Paul Donaher said. The first comp, which was a sketch, depicted a white woman with a black man. The headline said "Mix It."

"We're not putting enormous dollars behind this brand, so we can't spend too much on production," Fertitta said. "We want the hip young downtown market."

The next comp portrayed two youths. "Then two gay guys, and it says 'Drink it straight,' " Donaher narrated.

Roux looked unhappy. "I don't know," he said. "The word 'corny'—I'd like to have something which does show an alternative life style. Here we are showing a cartoon."

"The only thing I would say to that, Michel, is that it's so corny it's not corny," Donaher said.

"It's campy," Paula Brooks ventured.

"Right, it's campy," Donaher echoed happily.

"Let's say nobody is much brighter than I am," Roux said, with a laugh. "It's corny."

"O.K.—next," Donaher said, pushing no further. "Here is a campaign with the line 'Embrace the Unknown,' which I think is really great, because it's like an alternative, and it's now an unknown brand." He showed a comp with a photograph of a young black man and a young white man seated on a bed in a loft. The word "Priviet" was in large block letters, printed backward as well as forward. "I like the way the words are reversed," he said, "because that suggests an alternative life style."

"I also think it looks Russian to have the letters backward," Fertitta said.

Roux liked the "Embrace the Unknown" campaign—especially the comp of the interracial gay couple. "I don't think the two men should be run in a gay magazine," he said. "I don't want that kind of targeting. It could be in *Paper* or *Ocean Drive*." He pronounced "*Paper*" as "pepper."

"That's a good point," Fertitta said.

"*Soldier of Fortune*," Roux said, and everyone laughed. "Or *Field & Stream*."

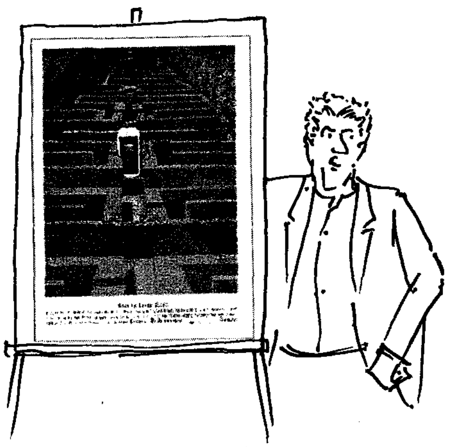
The final order of business was the campaign for Stolichnaya Cristall, a superpremium vodka. With sales of only forty thousand cases a year (compared with Stoli's eight hundred and fifty thousand), Cristall is a small brand, but Roux has big plans for it.

Creating an advertising campaign for Cristall was Margeotes' greatest challenge. Without disparaging premium vodka, which was, after all, the client's primary product, the advertising had to persuade people to spend six or seven dollars more than what a fancy bottle of vodka cost—and this at a time when, all the trend trackers agree, consumers are searching for value, not glamour. Roux had no immediate plans to spend much money promoting Priviet, but he was allocating forty per cent of his ad budget in his first year to Cristall. He waited apprehensively as the Margeotes team presented its ideas.

The first concept was based on a feature of the Cristall manufacturing process that seemed almost too good to be true. "There's a gold ring within the vat, and only five per cent of the vodka gravitates to that ring," Donaher said, "and that's what becomes Cristall."

"We're researching this right now," Fertitta interrupted, "and if it's something that we feel comfortable with we'll go with it. Otherwise, we'll go with the backup."

"We have to make sure what we are saying is true," Roux said. "If one inch is not true, we don't want it." He looked at the depiction of a Martini glass on the comp. "And, even if it's true, I want the olive out of the Martini." Roux believes that Martini olives are not classy.



A second concept also relied on a stage of the Cristall distillation procedure. "Cristall is the only vodka that's filtered through quartz crystals instead of charcoal," Donaher said, and this time no one challenged him. "These ads would use the line 'Flawless.' It's just enough to give the product the credibility it needs." The comp portrayed an elegant woman in an evening dress photographed through a gem-cut crystal.

"Again, it's a unique method that comes right from the product," Fertitta said. "From the name Cristall—and then a double meaning with the word 'flawless.' "

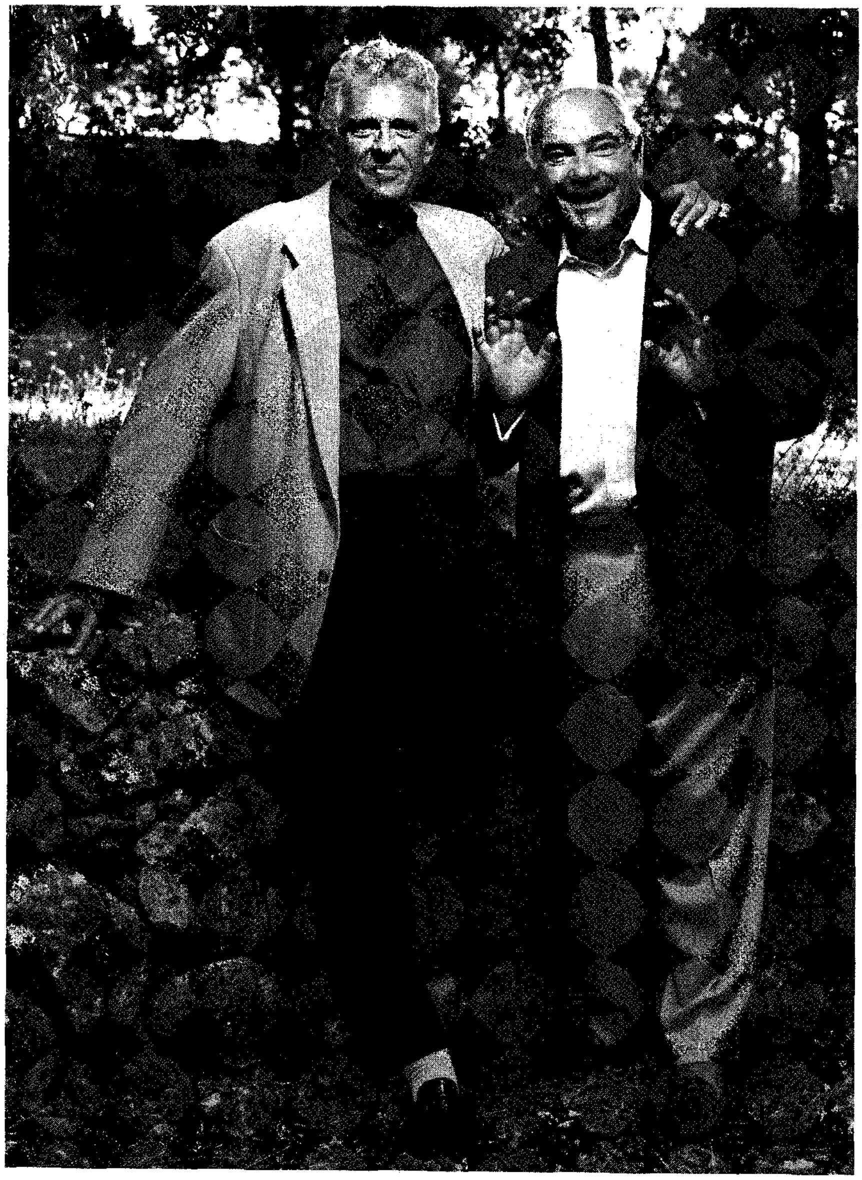
"How many creatives do you think we need to get the campaign going?" Roux asked. He wanted to know how many photographic executions would be required.

"I'd say four or five," Donaher replied.

"Now you're talking about a lot of money in production," Roux said, wiggling his eyebrows. "Photographers cost more than Russian artists." Roux has a print-advertising budget of between ten and twelve million dollars a year for all three brands—less than half of what he was spending on Absolut.

When the meeting broke up, a few minutes later, some decisions had been reached. The poster campaign for the Stolichnaya original brand—or base brand, as it's known—with "Freedom of Vodka" stencilled over the art would be produced, and the first ads would appear in about sixty magazines, including *The New Yorker*, early in the autumn. The "Embrace the Unknown" campaign for Priviet would be developed further, using photographs that portrayed unconventional life styles. And for Cristall "the gold ring" would be investigated, and if one inch turned out not to be true there was always "Flawless."

"I WAS so excited about the gold ring," Arnie Arlow, the creative director at Margeotes in charge of the Stolichnaya campaigns, said to me a month later, in his office. He had learned about the gold ring from the neck tag attached to a bottle of Cristall. "I told Michel, 'This is it. They've got a process where five per cent goes in the middle while the impurities go up or down.' We took a great photograph of a bottle with a gold ring around it. We would have said, 'Let the rest of the world drink the rest of the vodkas.' It made me, as a snob, really want to buy that vodka. Then we found out from people who made vodka that it wasn't possible. You can't get out that five per cent from the middle. It was someone's creative idea. In Russia, there is something called 'the gold ring' of five towns around Moscow. It came from that."



Creative director Arnie Arlow (left) gave up the Absolut account to go with his client, Michel Roux, a natural salesman who is as shrewd about projecting his own image as he is about promoting vodka.

NEIL SELKIRK

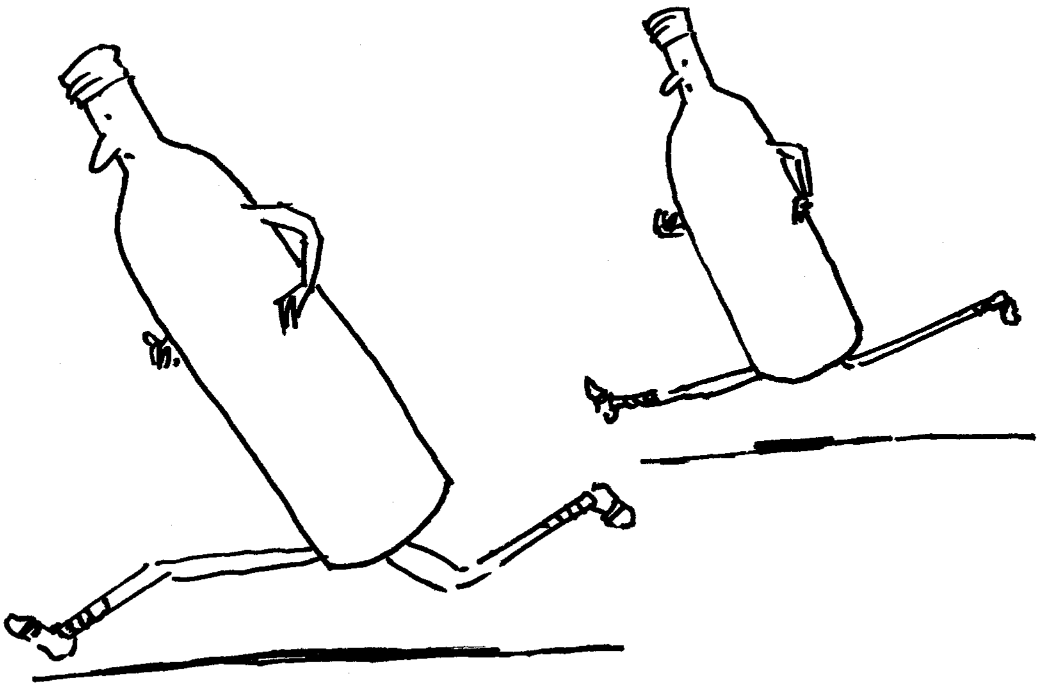
Arlow is an outgoing man of sixty, with bright-blue eyes, wavy silver-gray hair, and a Long Island summer tan. He started out in the mid-fifties as an artist, painting in Paris as a Fulbright scholar, before he was lured by the promise of the good life into a successful advertising career. He is always dapper, always joking, and could be a comic of the Milton Berle stripe. (In fact, he has taken a few classes in standup comedy.) Among advertising professionals, an item with a prestige label like Absolut or Stolichnaya, which people consume conspicuously, is called a "badge" product. Arlow is a quintessential buyer of badge products. He wears a Porsche wristwatch, and until he bought a Land Rover Discovery in June, he drove a Porsche 928. He favors Armani suits. At our first meeting, he asked if I drank vodka, and I said that I preferred gin. He then wondered if I drank Bombay Sapphire, which is another Carillon brand. When I said that I bought Tanqueray, he was incredulous.

"How can you drink Tanqueray?" he demanded. "That little green shit bottle?" He pulled a magazine off his desk and showed me an ad for Bombay Sapphire—part of a series that depicts the gin's blue bottle alongside a Martini glass created by a famous architect or designer. "Look at that glass that Michael Graves designed," he said. "Look at how beautiful it is."

A little defensively, I said that I liked the way Tanqueray tastes.

"Tastes change a lot by association," he replied. "If you felt proud or good with Sapphire, so that you really wanted to be associated with it because you like the image, your taste would come along."

Arlow had not attended the formal presentation to Carillon in New Jersey in May, because at the time he was negotiating the terms of his deal to come over to Margeotes from the TBWA agency, where he had been a co-creative director, in charge of the Absolut account. In the last round of selecting a new ad agency, Roux had suggested to the finalists the advantages of hiring a few key people from TBWA. Only Arlow, who was at the top of the list, made the jump. Even before Arlow officially joined Margeotes, however, he had collaborated on the Stoli campaign. It was Arlow, over Roux's initial objections, who dreamed up the notion of stencilling "Freedom of Vodka" on the poster art. The poster art had been Roux's idea in the first place. As for "Freedom of Vodka," the Margeotes agency had invented the line before either Roux or Arlow was involved with the brand. Last autumn, when PepsiCo was directing the American marketing of Stolichnaya, Margeotes had come heartbreakingly close to landing the Stoli account. PepsiCo was then auditioning agencies to replace Calet, Hirsch & Ferrell, the shop that had produced a series of baffling, insistently wacky "Stolar System" ads. (In ad lingo, the "Stolar System" campaign, which portrayed tomatoes, oranges, and other mixable fruits revolving around a Stoli bottle, committed the cardinal sin of "borrowed interest"; that is, its appeal for your attention had nothing to do with the product's virtues.) A day before the decision was due, Fertitta got a "good news, bad news" phone call from PepsiCo. The Margeotes campaign was testing extremely well with focus groups—but PepsiCo was about to announce that



A CAMPAIGN WITH LEGS IS ONE THAT CAN RUN FOR A LONG TIME.

Carillon would be getting the brand, so the contest was over. Roux would conduct his own agency review.

Roux interviewed thirty agencies before awarding the account to Margeotes, a midsize shop with a reputation for clever, upscale campaigns, for products such as Godiva chocolates and Jovan Musk. Although Roux says that "chemistry" dictated his choice, he did examine the work that Margeotes had presented in the PepsiCo pitch. According to a popular adage in the ad industry, the worst thing that can happen in the pitch process is for the client to fall in love with the campaign, rather than with the agency, because that boxes the winning agency into a framework made under deadline pressure and informed by only a sketchy blueprint of the client's needs. Notwithstanding this old saw, however, and the touting of "chemistry" (especially by the chief executives who embody their agencies' chemistry), the client often does fall in love with the campaign. The Absolut experience is a good example of that. In 1980, as one of ninety-six agencies—a preposterous number—pitching for the business, TBWA presented Carillon with the Absolut campaign that is still running. ("Absolut Perfection," an ad of a bottle sporting a halo, was one of the original comps that have appeared ever since.) Margeotes, in making its Stoli pitch to PepsiCo, presented several campaigns, including one in which Russian citizens embraced Western clothes, Western music, and everything else from the West but Western vodka. The visuals were black-and-white photographs of young, hip-looking Russians. The recurring tag line was "Freedom of Vodka."

Paul Opperman, who came up with the line, is young and hip-looking himself. A chunky, ebullient thirty-four-year-old who has a crewcut and wears an earring, Opperman was working out of an office at Margeotes that featured a boom box with an impressive collection of punk and progressive rock, and a noose fashioned from neckties with his business card in the loop. (He left in mid-July, along with the Margeotes executive creative director, Jeff Weiss, to start a small satellite agency under the aegis of McCann-Erickson.) Last November, when Opperman was asked to find a way to emphasize Stolichnaya's Russian heritage, he dreamed up and discarded dozens of phrases, such as "The Vodka of the Party," "The People's Vodka," and "The Real McCoyavitch." He tried a campaign with a Molotov cocktail made from a Stoli bottle, and the line "Revolt!" He tried another that portrayed a Stoli bottle backlit like the bottle in an Absolut ad, with the phrase "Absolute Vodka." He did library research for a campaign that glorified vodka's heritage under the czars. "One of the things about this business is you have to go through all the clichés and get them out of your system before you come up with anything," he said later. While he was standing outside Jeff Weiss's office, waiting to present his ideas, he scribbled "Freedom of Vodka" on a list of phrases that he had prepared. The line stuck. After developing, with an art director, the campaign that portrayed pro-Western Russians rejecting Western vodka, Opperman went off to other clients and forgot about it. Later, when he was called back to work on the account, this time for Roux, the "Freedom of Vodka" format for Stoli was set. What needed help was the superpremium brand, Cristall.

ROUX began by thinking of Cristall as "the ultimate." He said, "I had this vision of an ad with a bunch of flowers, but among these flowers one would be more beautiful than the others. Or a bunch of butterflies, but one would be more beautiful. A fish school, all the same fish—except for one bright-colored one." From Arlow's point of view, there were a number of things wrong with this concept. It wasn't involving, it didn't have legs, and it skated treacherously close to borrowed interest. On top of all that, it was smug and boastful. Arlow was sure that the "ultra-sophisticated" consumer, who was the target for a superpremium vodka, was cynical about advertising, and would entertain claims of superiority only if they were substantiated by facts or expressed tongue in cheek—or, preferably, both. He loved the idea of the gold ring, because it illustrated a process that appeared to elevate Cristall above the competition. But when the gold ring collapsed, what was left was the "Flawless" campaign. Relying on beautifully produced photographs shot through crystal, the "Flawless" campaign improved on Roux's "ultimate" concept in one crucial respect: it set up a mnemonic association between the name of the brand and its touted image; that is, it wasn't borrowed interest, and it was, indeed, "ownable"—a campaign that wouldn't work with any other brand name. As far as Arlow was concerned, however, that was all it had going for it. "It was too chic for me, too pretty, too imagy," he said. "It didn't convince me that I should spend seven or eight extra dollars on the bottle." Three creative teams—a copywriter and an art director on each—were assigned to work independently to come up with something better. Their deadline was midsummer, so the ads could appear during the all-important pre-Christmas buying season. As a starting point, they were given a "creative brief" on what was unique in the Cristall distillation process. It read, in part:

> To make Cristall Vodka, Russia's very highest grade beverage alcohol (GOS Regulation "Lux") is diluted with purified water and then passed through the carbon treatment and filtration process. The process consists of three sub-steps: first a quartz crystal filtration, then carbon treatment, and finally another quartz crystal filtration.

On the morning of June 7th, an art director named Tom Mennillo and a freelance copywriter named Lori Korchek came into Arlow's office to report on their progress. Mennillo, who had done the art direction for the Stoli base brand's "Freedom of Vodka" poster campaign, was dressed in jeans, a suit jacket, and two black T-shirts, one worn over the other. His thinning black hair was slicked back and he wore a goatee. Korchek was an attractive, short-haired young woman with a sharp-edged downtown style. As Mennillo unfolded the roughs—sketches in black marker on oversized tracing paper—Arlow remarked, "If we said that vodka is distilled three times—through quartz, charcoal, and quartz—you'd look at it and yawn. We have to take that and glamorize it."

Korchek began by explaining their first concept. "Because this vodka is distilled differently than any other, it's purer and smoother," she said. "Once you've tasted something better than you have before, you'll have trouble going back." On an artist's pad Mennillo had drawn a glass made of barbed wire on the left and a normal Martini glass on the right. The two glasses were linked by a copy line: "A vodka that is distilled over charcoal alone is not quite as smooth as a vodka that's distilled over quartz."

Arlow shook his head. "Anything that disparages the category is bad for the business," he said. "And it goes beyond that. The real money reason is, we have another vodka." So far as he knew, that vodka, the Stolichnaya base brand, was filtered with charcoal alone. It would be foolish to build up the superpremium brand by kicking down the premium base brand. "Also, you want people to feel good about you," he said. "You don't want to take advantage."

As a second idea, Mennillo had brought in a few books of black-and-white photographs. The art directors at Margeotes pile up photography books and magazines in cubicles and rifle them for images—known as "swipe art"—to use in their comps. Mennillo had put together a layout of two giant Dobermans guarding a bottle of Cristall, and Korchek's copy read, "Russia's premium grade Lux alcohol. Filtered through activated birchwood carbon. Purified through double quartz distillation." Set off in parentheses below that block of text was the line "Anti-theft device not included." In larger type was the tag line: "Stolichnaya Cristall. Flawless." Other versions of the ad used swiped photographs of soldiers guarding Lenin's tomb and of a Brink's truck. Mennillo thought that the pictures should be black-and-white, evoking the Cristall label. The photographs were stand-ins: if the campaign was produced, a photographer would be hired to reinterpret the idea. The process resembles the way in which, to score a movie, a director will show a composer a scene, then play a popular song and say, "Write me something like that." It's a reason that movies tend to sound alike and ads tend to look alike.

Arlow responded enthusiastically to this campaign. "The idea—that it's distilled finer and purer than anyone else's, and that's why we're protecting it—I think is great," he said. "It means a vodka so precious that people are going to steal it." He also thought that the mere presence of so many words in a vodka ad would provide a unique look. "Most of the copy you see in vodka ads is mandatory," he said. The "mandatory" is the text that provides the name of the distributor, the alcoholic proof of the beverage, and other information that would be unreadable even if it weren't set in minuscule type. "In terms of beverage alcohol," Arlow said, "this is more like single-malt Scotch than anything else." He suggested to Mennillo that the text go at the top of the ad, to emphasize that "this is copy that's meant to be understood and enjoyed," and he asked Korchek to clarify the point that quartz filtration is an extraordinary process that elevates Cristall above its peers.

"How can we expand this beyond security?" he said then. "Before we go to Michel, we have to show that it has legs." Korchek suggested a futuristic protection device set up around a bar, but Arlow thought that bars were "too close to home." He wanted ideas that were "out there."

"The bigger idea is covetousness, beyond protection," Korchek said, and she promised to give it more thought.

All three were excited about using black-and-white photographs, which would suggest not just the look of the label but the experience of the drink.

"Vodka has an edge," Korchek said. "It's a clean, cool razor cut. This is a fast car to me. Scotch is a gold, smoky drink. Vodka is black and white."

THE second team, of two women—a tall, blond young art director and a short, dark, red-lipsticked young copywriter—reported to Arlow the next morning. "The first idea that we're gonna throw you is the one that's direct and no bullshit," the art director said. She read the copy line from a rough that depicted half the bottle: "Prepare yourself for something fairly radical and controversial. Truth in advertising." The next layout was the same, with this copy line: "Although appearances are important, we'd like to concentrate on substance."

"Truth in advertising is sort of like slapping yourself on the back without anything happening," Arlow said. "We have to get to the substance more quickly."

The art director raised the next sketch and read, "Our accountant suggested that we cut costs by filtering our vodka through plastic rather than fine crystals. So we fired him."

Here, again, was a campaign that disparaged other vodkas, including the Stoli base brand. "In Russia, they call this 'Extra,' " Arlow said, lifting a bottle of Stoli from his desk, "and they call this"—he pointed to Cristall—" 'Lux.' They don't call this 'Lux' and this 'Shit.' "

To steer them onto the right path, Arlow told them about the protection campaign that the first team was working on and described the "Freedom of Vodka" campaign for the Stoli base brand. "When Stolichnaya breaks, people will think, I'm going to order Stolichnaya, because I want to be associated with freedom," he said. "Absolut was associated with mind games and cleverness, Stolichnaya is going to be associated with a freer spirit, with what is happening in Eastern Europe. We have nothing in this product that can make it more than Absolut or Finlandia. It has to be emotional. If this is authenticity and freedom, *this*"—he put his hand on the bottle of Cristall—"has to be finer and more precious. If this was emotional in a free way, *this* has to be emotional in another way. In a snob way. There's an emotion to that, too."

The third team was developing the "Flawless" campaign, which an art director named Laura Karetzky had produced for the Carillon presentation in May. Because Arlow believed that a pretty picture alone would not persuade someone to buy an expensive bottle of Cristall, he had asked her to brainstorm with a copywriter. "Liking the ad is second," he said. "Getting the message is first. They've got to get the fucking message that this is better stuff."

Working with a young freelancer, Rich Childs, Karetzky presented her new ideas on June 10th. Childs read the lines first.

"Filtered twice through crystallized quartz. You may want to tighten your social circles," he read, and then "Filtered twice through crystallized quartz. You may want to review the guest list," and concluded with "When Stolichnaya Cristall is on the table, beware the intimidation factor." He looked up, and said, "It's got a little bit of humor, so it's not too snobby."

Arlow slowly warmed to the idea. "The truth is, people do feel that way," he said. "They would restrict their best liquor for a few people."

Karetzky's visuals—for instance, a couple sitting in an empty room for "Review the guest list"—veered away from the concept of shooting through crystal. Arlow wondered if the lines might work with the old layouts. Karetzky pulled out the comp of a woman in a ball gown seen through a gemstone, with a blown-up label of Cristall as the background.

Half to himself, Arlow said, "One possibility is that the things shot through the crystal pick up something from the line." He began sketching with a black marker on an art pad the word "Please" as it might appear on an invitation, photographed through a crystal.

"Yeah, that's nice," Karetzky said. "Doing something through crystal that's related slightly to what we're talking about. I'm thinking, Will it have enough legs? I think we're close to a hip way of talking about something this good: 'Something this good is dangerous. It will change your life. You may have to alter your guest list.' "

After Karetzky and Childs left his office, Arlow said, "Now we can use the device of shooting through crystal and put some spin on it. Before, it had no spin. Now I'm happy. I've got two ways of going. I feel good. What's also nice is that it's true. Everyone knows that when you have a party for twelve people you're not pouring Cristall. You're pouring out of a jug."

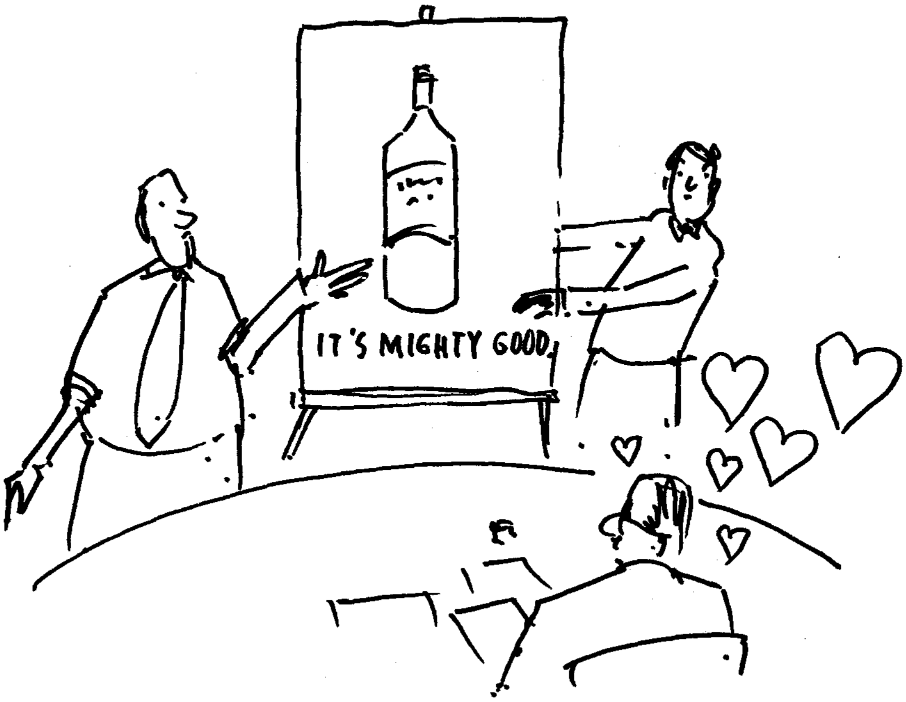
In advertising, there are legendary campaigns and legendary copywriters but very few legendary clients. Michel Roux is one of the few. He understands advertising, and he believes in it. In the past, refusing ever to discount Absolut, he increased his ad budget as sales rose, and constantly pressed TBWA to astonish him. "Michel always wanted to try something new," Dick Costello, the president of TBWA, said recently. "When we came in with a proposal, he would ask, 'Has anyone ever done this before? Is it right for the brand?' Most clients would first ask, 'How much does it cost?' " Roux, who grew up in southwestern France, emigrated to Texas after an army tour, and worked in hotels, then restaurants, before he finally found his calling in the liquor business. A natural salesman, he is as savvy about projecting his own image as he is about promoting vodka. He was Mr. Absolut. "Whatever he saw, whatever he looked at, was for Absolut," Arlow recalled. "His entire being was devoted to that product. If he saw a napkin, he thought, That color could be right for Absolut."

STOLICHNAYA
Cristall

It wasn't that Roux had no other life: he and Kitty, his wife of fourteen years, who live in Teaneck, have an eleven-year-old son, Max. (He also has an adult son in France, from a brief first marriage.) But his intense devotion to his brand wildly exceeded the normal bounds of work. Whenever he visited someone's home, he would surreptitiously check the freezer for Absolut (or, God forbid, a rival). Once, seven or eight years ago, he and his family drove out to Southampton for a weekend with a couple who are among their closest friends—who, indeed, introduced Michel to Kitty. Soon after arriving, Michel detected a bottle of Stolichnaya. Leaving Kitty and Max to enjoy their weekend at the beach, he got back in his car and drove home. "It was like an insult," he told me. "People do not know how much at heart you have your brands." Another time, in a story that has attained mythic status among his colleagues, Roux saw a fat, slovenly man at Newark airport wearing an Absolut T-shirt. Saying that he wanted it for his collection, Roux bought the garment for fifty dollars, and stopped manufacturing Absolut T-shirts.

If there was one concept that defined Roux's Absolut, it was an innovation that he embraced with even more than his usual exuberance: the commissioning of original Absolut art. As was typically the case, Roux recognized a good idea and expanded it. In 1985, Andy Warhol proposed painting the Absolut bottle for a sixty-five-thousand-dollar fee. The people at Carillon and TBWA thought that the idea had P.R. possibilities. Roux, however, saw the painting as an ad. Over the objections of the advertising professionals, who didn't want to interrupt the consistent campaign image of the backlit photographed bottle, Roux had a Warhol ad produced. At first, the agency cautiously ran it only in art magazines, but the response was so positive that soon it was running everywhere, and Roux was out looking for new artists.

Instead of being merely a liquor salesman, he was now a patron of the arts. The transformation was crucial, for the man and for the brand. For Roux, the whole world could be subsumed under the Absolut label, and he began commissioning Absolut fashions and Absolut concerts along with Absolut artwork. Absolut, already an advertising icon, became a cultural icon as well. Blessed with an undentable constitution, Roux was out most nights until the early morning "promoting the brand" (that is, drinking it) at fashionable bars and restaurants, meeting new artists, signing up new work. "He got a lot more self-confident," Richard Lewis, the Absolut account-management supervisor at TBWA, told me. "When he won the day on the Andy Warhol ad—everyone from [TBWA chairman] Bill Tragos on down said that it was a terrible idea, but once it was shown that it was not a terrible idea, and it was his idea—he started to believe more and more in his own ideas. I think he thought he'd become infallible." What began as annual art commissions became monthly or weekly ones. "Michel has enormous appetites for everything he does," Lewis said. "He loved commissioning artists, he loved being the Medici of Teaneck." Paintings were delivered to the office in New Jersey until they covered the walls and spilled out of the closets. But as Roux kept finding younger and more obscure artists the professionals at the agency began to believe that the ads were losing their punch. "I think the Swedes found it tedious," Lewis said. "Everybody tiptoed around this."



THE WORST THING THAT CAN HAPPEN IN THE PITCH PROCESS IS FOR THE CLIENT TO FALL IN LOVE WITH THE CAMPAIGN, RATHER THAN WITH THE AGENCY.

When I asked Curt Nycander, the executive vice-president of Vin & Sprit, why he changed distributors, he said, "It was not because of Michel that we came to this conclusion. It was a matter of the bigger industrial structures." The Swedes, having exceeded their own most optimistic forecasts, now wanted to keep growing. Although Absolut dominated the Northeast, Florida, and Chicago, it remained a minor brand in sections of the country where the Carillon sales force was weaker and the ad campaign had less clout. V. & S. also longed for new markets, particularly in Europe. In 1987, Carillon's parent company, Grand Metropolitan, acquired Heublein, which has, among other brands, Smirnoff vodka. In the United States, Absolut is priced above Smirnoff, but in other countries the two brands are sometimes competitors. Grand Met also sells Finlandia. "We came to the conclusion that being one of many vodkas means you have to compromise with the others," Nycander said.

"People thought that the irrational would not happen," Roux said this summer. "Why change things when they were going so well?" Attuned as he was to each opportunity for Absolut, he paid far less attention to the sensibilities of the brand's owners. Nycander informed several people at TBWA that he was irritated by Roux's grandstanding. In June, 1993, as Edward F. McDonnell, the president of the Seagram Spirits and Wine Group, was about to fly to Sweden for a round of negotiations, he saw to his surprise a long article in the Sunday New York *Times* that described how magazine ad salesmen made pitches for the Absolut business. "Michel, and not the brand, was clearly the focal point," McDonnell said recently. "I was floored. I got that thing, and I thought, My God, am I grateful. I honestly felt that they had lost their way. Absolut should be the champion, and not Michel." He took the newspaper with him to show Nycander. He eventually got the business.

AFTER a dozen years, Arnie Arlow has a good grasp of what Roux wants. It's not always the same as what Arlow wants, so Arlow searches for the overlap. He wants to keep the client happy without losing his own fervor. "All of us advertising people are whores," he says. "But when you put your heart and soul into marketing something, you have to believe in it or it's not going to work."

Although Arlow knew that the Carillon executives liked the "Flawless" concept for Cristall, he himself could never build up any enthusiasm for it. Upon hearing that his first Cristall team had a new version of its protection campaign, which dropped the "Flawless" line entirely, he approved. "I thought earlier, Prove it to me, don't tell me," he said. Tom Mennillo showed him sketches of a bottle of Cristall in hard-to-reach places: on top of the Chrysler Building, aboard the Voyager, on a lightning rod, beside a frightening voodoo mask. "The line is 'Nothing comes close,' " Mennillo said. "The double-entendre is that nothing can come near it and that no other vodka equals it." Lori Korchek had originally tried "Nothing else can touch it," then refined that to "Nothing else comes near." Mennillo had tweaked it to its present form.

Arlow loved the versions with what he called "the protection devices"—the lightning rod, the mask—but not the ones in which the bottle was merely inaccessible. With vociferous encouragement, he sent Mennillo and Korchek off to compose body copy—the text that would run with the headline.

The second team also had something to report.

"It's going to be a scale," the blond art director said, "and Cristall will be outweighing everything on the other side of the scale. Like a '68 Mercedes convertible. Cristall will be 'more rare.' "

"We have a whole list of things," the red-lipsticked copywriter said. "For 'pure,' it could be an iceberg."

"How will you know what the outweighs means?" Arlow asked.

"It's not so literal," the copywriter said. " 'Rare' would be a car. 'Pure' would be an iceberg. And we could take it to the holidays."

"Then on, say, Valentine's Day we could have pearl necklaces, chocolates, all piled up, and then a bottle on the other side," the art director said.

"And then what words would you have for it?" Arlow asked.

They agreed to do more work and get back to him.

When they returned a few hours later, they had roughs on tissue paper. In each case, the bottle was outweighing what was on the other side of the balance. "More *Pure* than an iceberg? Even skeptics concede—once they taste vodka filtered through pure quartz crystals" was the line in one execution.

"I think that the scale gets in the way, believe it or not," Arlow said. "The bottle is heavier than the iceberg, although it's really not, but it is because of the purity. It's not like a clear, direct, simple thought. Look further, or maybe simplify it."

The next day, the first team presented the body copy that Korchek had composed. It read, "If you are fortunate enough to get your hands on a bottle, you will be in possession of a peerless vodka. The shimmering result of a purification process as rigorous as it is rare. Every ounce filtered over quartz crystals, again and again. Removing impurities that conventional carbon filtration alone cannot. Unleashing a spirit so flawless, it can't be touched. Cristall. By Stolichnaya. NOTHING COMES CLOSE."

Arlow was enraptured. He rolled certain phrases luxuriously on his tongue. "As rigorous as it is rare" was a particular favorite. He offered a few minor adjustments. Even if you made allowances for the high lyric tones of copywriting, "again and again" did not sound like "twice"; he replaced it with "once and again." He also thought that "peerless" undercut "flawless," so he changed it to "like no other."

Mennillo showed photographic artwork composed on the computer. In one comp he had inserted a bottle on top of Lenin's tomb; in another, between two Dobermans. He worried that the bottle looked rather small.

"We're not using the bottle as logo, we're using the bottle as hero," Arlow said. "So it doesn't always have to be so big." A bottle is used as logo if, for example, the photograph is of people drinking at a party and the bottle is reproduced on a corner of the page. In the Cristall campaigns that Arlow was developing, the bottle was always in the thick of things—the hero.

It was Friday afternoon. Roux wanted to see the campaign before he departed the following weekend for a Grand Met conference in Budapest. Time was short.

On Monday, the first team showed "tight" comps—renditions produced on the computer which looked remarkably close to finished ads—of "Nothing Comes Close." "The computer is great as a presentation tool," Mennillo told me. "You really can't dream on a computer, though. You wind up thinking about the commands." The swipe art was in black-and-white, and so were the comps.

Arlow read the body copy and looked a little worried. "They may have a problem now, because they're so into the 'flawless' idea," he said, referring to the Carillon people. "Even though this says 'flawless,' it doesn't emphasize it so much." He asked that the typeface be simplified. And, despite his earlier reassurances, now that he saw the comp he wanted the bottle larger. "It should be more luxurious and monumental and worthy of being guarded," he said. He moved the tag line, "Nothing comes close," from the bottom of the body text to the top, so that it played off the picture. He read the copy again. "I think this is sensational," he said. "I know their comments already: 'How come "Cristall by Stolichnaya" is so small?' Because of the chicness of the ad. It's a combination of newsworthiness and chic."

"Do you want more?" Mennillo asked.

"Definitely. One big question that's going to come out is, How long can we do this? We definitely want to figure out more ways of protection. If there's this incredible hedge maze with a bottle in the center, that's another great way."

MENNILLO left. The second team was waiting at the door.

"Since the scale didn't work, we thought of another idea," the art director said. "Using the 'greater than' sign." She showed Arlow the rough.

"Does anyone know that sign?" Arlow asked.

The art director jerked her head back slightly. "I think it's pretty elementary," she said.

Arlow read the copy. " '*Greater than* the purity of an iceberg? Even skeptics concede—once they taste vodka filtered through pure quartz crystals.' You see, I think that has to be done more tongue in cheek. The copy, I mean. If I were going to write this, it would be something like 'Is it possible that a vodka could be purer than the purest thing on earth? Maybe—if you filter it through quartz.' You have to tease me a little more."

Their next idea was a big picture of the bottle with a hook or a gloved hand trying to steal it. That was too close conceptually to the protection campaign, Arlow said, and, even worse, it looked like an Absolut ad.

The art director unwrapped another rough. "This idea would be very surreal and eccentric," she said. "A woman standing all in black with crystal glasses over her eyes, the kind of glasses that help you sleep." She showed Arlow such an image in a photograph collection called "The Hat Book."

"The whole idea would be the power of crystal," the copywriter said.

"More New Age," Arlow said. "It's again to me probably for a person who is not necessarily the person who is looking for the finest vodka and is willing to pay seven or eight dollars for the show and prestige. This would fit better for Priviet than for the top-of-the-line elegant." He returned to their first series, using the "greater than" sign. "I think this is the one to work with," he said. He told them that the New Age one was also possible, if they could hoist it upmarket.

They left his office, and he shook his head sadly. Later that afternoon, the art director and the copywriter stopped me in a corridor and asked me not to publish their names.

THE creative teams showed up early the next morning for a final review before the client arrived.

Arlow didn't like the sketch of a Martini glass under crystal that accompanied the line "Consider the intimidation factor" in the third team's "Flawless" campaign. "It always seemed to me that the woman dressed to the nines was an intimidating factor," he said. "This with just the glass doesn't say intimidation to me."

Karetzky retrieved the earlier artwork for Arlow to present with the copy.

When the first team appeared with the completed "Nothing Comes Close" comps, Arlow suggested a typeface change but was otherwise delighted. He loved the informative body copy. "The whole thing I was afraid of with this concept was that it would be dry and factual and boring," he said. "We've made it fun and a game." Mennillo took the comps away to mount them on black board for the presentation.

After everyone had left, Arlow said to me, pointing to the "Flawless" sketch, "I don't want to produce that. I'll show it to him to show the transition. For me, crystal is a dead end. It doesn't have the same kind of legs from ad to ad."

Roux, accompanied by Capria, the director of marketing services, arrived at ten-thirty. Arlow first showed them some new artwork in the "Freedom of Vodka" campaign. Then, as a warmup for the Cristall presentation, he reminisced about the spurious gold ring and waxed poetic about the technical process that sets Cristall apart.

"You know where we are today, Tuesday?" Roux interrupted. "I need a slide of finished stuff by Friday."

"You know, I think I'm going to go to the finish," Arlow said. Instead of opening as he had planned, with a review of everything he had rejected, he presented the reasoning behind his favorite campaign. "We take this technical information so that people when they read the ad will know it's magical, it's on a pedestal," he said. "There's a vodka around that a lot of people are drinking. Can we change their minds?"

"Can we see the ads?" Roux said, laughing but irritated. "I'm falling asleep here."

"When we filter it this way, no other vodka can even come close," Arlow said. "So how can we say that and make a charming, interesting presentation? The pictures I'm going to show you are mockups." He unveiled the comp of soldiers guarding a bottle on top of Lenin's tomb. "Nothing comes close—because nothing comes close in taste and nothing can get close to its protection. And this ad copy should be the same for every single ad, until everybody gets the message." He read Korchek's body copy on the triple-filtration process.

"Who is going to read that?" Roux asked.

"Everybody," Arlow said. "The thing we did wrong from the beginning was not explain it. I think people will read it. They'll read ads about Mercedes, they'll read ads about sneakers."

"But those are ads that are not beverage alcohol," Capria said. His voice, loud and nasal, pierced the air like a car alarm.

"You know why there's no copy in beverage alcohol?" Arlow said. "It's all puffery. This isn't puffery. This is our gold ring."

"The knowledge of the brand is very small," Roux said. "What are you doing to increase awareness?" In traditional advertising thinking, the way to increase awareness is to run a picture of the product as large as possible. Unfortunately, in the next comp that Arlow presented, the two Dobermans loomed over the bottle.

"Don't use animals with Cristall," Capria wailed. "It's not the image."

"That's the Doberman that killed the governor of Bermuda," Roux said, chuckling.

"Don't laugh," Arlow beseeched the client. "Please don't laugh." He showed the rough sketches of a hedge maze and a laser protection device.

"I like these two better," Roux said of the sketches. "I know what you are trying to do. These send you a message." He pointed to the Dobermans comp and issued an uncharacteristically straight-forward directive. "Instead of having the dogs, you have two Russian guards."

"That's this one," Arlow said, pointing to the photograph of Lenin's tomb, which had two small guards pacing in front of it.

"No, that is this one," Roux retorted, pointing obstinately to the large Dober-

I THINK IF WE CAN TONE DOWN THE BA-DUM, BA-DUM, IT'S BETTER.

READ THE COPY SLOWLY. IT'S BEAUTIFUL COPY.

mans. "The first ad is very important. The concept is good, but I don't know about the execution. Hopefully, someone will come near it." He smiled at his joke.

Laughing, Capria said, "They'll pick it up and carry it out of the store." Then he asked, "What happened to the 'Flawless' thing? The 'Flawless' thing is good."

"You can shoot through crystal from now until tomorrow, and it will not have the involvement you get in this campaign," Arlow replied. He showed them the "Flawless" comp of a woman in an evening gown photographed through crystal. "My opinion of what we have here is that it's simply not enough to shoot through crystal to look pretty," he said, "because it's not going to convince me to go and buy that bottle of liquor." He showed the "Review the guest list" sketch, with a corner of an invitation under crystal. Roux was riffling through a magazine. "Over the long term, some kind of boredom factor will come in," Arlow said. "It can be pretty. It doesn't have the power."

Roux looked up.

"The third campaign comes from crystals," Arlow said. He displayed the latest execution of the New Age concept, in which "ancient Chinese priests" were guarding large quartz crystals.

Roux shook his head.

"It's in a sense borrowed interest, and the bottle is not on a pedestal," Arlow continued smoothly. "The other idea is doing a comparison." He showed the "greater than" sketch of the (relatively) impure iceberg.

Roux shook his head and grimaced.

"Again, I'm showing you these things to show you the thinking."

Roux turned to the "Nothing Comes Close" comps against the wall. "I think it's a great idea," he said. "You need the first execution to be splendid. I need two Russian guards somewhere—not Lenin's tomb." He looked at that comp. "It's too complicated. I'd like to see more of the bottle."

"Let us come up with—now that you're interested in this thing—various executions," Arlow said.

Capria reminded them firmly that he needed finished versions by Friday. The deadline wasn't the only thing bothering him. "You want to use the line 'Nothing comes close,' eh?" he said. "I still like the line 'Flawless.' "

"If you want to use the photo of protection, 'Nothing comes close' is the double-entendre," Arlow said. "You're playing a wonderful game. 'Flawless' is in the copy."

Capria seemed unconvinced. "To me, 'Flawless' says you have it in the taste, the product in the bottle," he said.

By this point, Roux was no longer listening. He had summoned Paula Brooks, Margeotes' media-services director, and was discussing with her the "Freedom of Vodka" campaign for the base brand, and whether there would be an adequate number of artistic renditions in hand, and enough money to produce them, to insure a big splash in mid-September. He was scheming up ways to induce the magazines to share the production costs.

After Roux and Capria left, Arlow called in Mennillo. "We have a victory, and yet for me it's not a total victory," he said. "I understand the Lenin's tomb. He says *it's* too complicated. I want to retain the scope. The thing I want to avoid is getting too close to Absolut." He paused, and then added, as if consciously cheering himself up, "I'm happy. We made the sale."

"Shooting the crystal is dead," Mennillo said.

"I think so. It didn't have the power. This is the beginning of a sacred trust. We can go beyond Absolut stylistically. It can be the most beautiful page in advertising." After Mennillo left, he said, "O.K., great, I feel good now. I feel pretty good. It's the beginning, and it's a good beginning."

THE next morning at seven-thirty, Arlow got together in his office with Christine MacMaster and her superior, Bob Manni, who was a new account director, hired from Young & Rubicam to work on Stolichnaya. They were about to take to Roux, in New Jersey, three versions of soldiers guarding the Cristall bottle, perched on top of different Russian monuments. "I love the one with Lenin's tomb," Arlow said to Manni in the car on the way over. That doctored photograph showed two small soldiers on the roof and the bottle within the tomb below. "I think he feels that that may be a little sacrilegious."

In the Carillon conference room, Roux looked at the comps and said, "Why don't you want the guards to be next to the bottle?"

"We tried it with them down there," Arlow said. "It doesn't look as significant."

Roux pointed to the Lenin's-tomb rendition. "I'm looking at it, and I don't know what they're doing up there," he said. "They're guarding the building, not the bottle."

"I just have a thing with 'Nothing Comes Close,' " Capria said. "It doesn't give me the idea of what's in the bottle.

If I put 'Flawless' on a billboard next to the bottle, it says something. If I say 'Nothing comes close,' it doesn't tell me that."

" 'Flawless' is patting ourselves on the back," Arlow replied. "This vodka is filtered twice through quartz crystals. There's a reason why it's better. It's no longer puffery."

"Where are the dogs?" Roux suddenly demanded. "Could you give me some soldiers instead of the dogs? If I put two soldiers in front of the bottle, I know it's being guarded."

"The bottle in the middle with two soldiers on the sides sounds like Absolut," Arlow said.

"Can you get me two soldiers and the bottle?" Roux repeated.

"We did it in the office. I can show it to you. This has its own character and charm. It's totally different from Absolut."

"I think the first one should be a very, very strong statement," Roux said. "This one is not a strong statement. The people don't understand what's in the back. My secretary will think it's statues." He called for a secretary to come into the conference room.

"Fine," Arlow said, in a resigned voice. "The secretary test."

A secretary entered, and Roux showed her not the Lenin's tomb ad but another one, with two soldiers on top of a monumental arch and a Stoli bottle under it. He asked her to describe the ad.

"I see a bottle of Stoli," she said. "It looks very Greek. They look like Russian soldiers on top."

"What are they doing?" Roux asked.

"They look like they're guarding it," she said.

Arlow blew her kisses. Roux said that she could leave, and called for another secretary, by name. He asked the second secretary what the ad meant to her. "Honestly?" she asked. "It means nothing to me."

"Look, do me a favor," Arlow said to Roux, after the second secretary left the room. "I don't really care about their opinion of the advertising, whether it hits or doesn't hit. What I want to know is that they see guards guarding a bottle of a monument built to Cristall. We're trying to put Cristall on a pedestal, to show that it needs to be guarded, as a way of building up the product."

"I am not debating any of those things," Roux said. "But I'm telling you that for the first ad you need something stronger."

"Bigger soldiers?"

"No doubt."

"The easiest thing in the world for me is to blow up these two soldiers. It's not going to have the incredible look of this campaign. It will look like a still-life and more like another vodka that is being advertised."

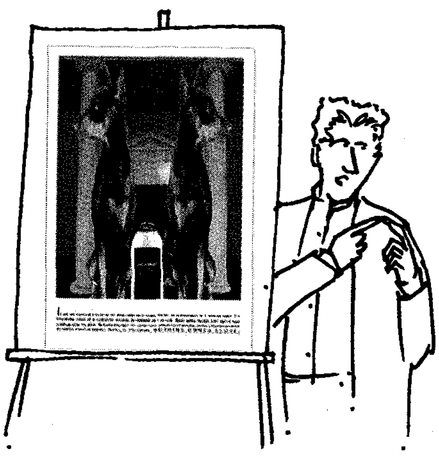
Roux pointed to the comps on the table. "These are very good for the future. We need a stronger statement coming out of the box."

"I'm thinking again of Absolut," Arlow said. "The first ad was a bottle with a halo on it. The power of the campaign came from doing it again and again and again. Are we asking too much of the first ad?"

"I'm telling you, this is beautiful, this is nice, when you are selling two hundred thousand cases," Roux said. "But do for me—"

"I understand." Arlow promised that when Roux came to Margeotes that afternoon for media meetings he would see two big soldiers with a bottle.

BACK at Margeotes, Arlow explained to Mennillo what had happened. "He wants the first ad to make a bigger impact. Bigger bottle, bigger soldiers. I don't want to give him something that he thinks is wonderful and we think is shit. Two soldiers and a bottle." He began sketching on a pad and then tossed the marker down. "It's too obvious, too simple, and this is Absolut," Arlow said. "We'll be a laughingstock. This is Absolut. My problem is, I know this is what he wants. But when I see it I'm not going to be happy with it. I'm disappointed, because I think a more sophisticated audience is used to seeing less obvious images. I'm going to show Michel the red-white-and-blue plaid suit, but I'm gonna hope he picks the sophisticated gray one." He reviewed the morning's events ruefully. "I'm a trained painter," he said. "I know the entire history of art. I've been well renowned in advertising. I feel like a doctor who took blood and made electrocardiograms and I'm at the end of the examination and I say, 'Mr. Cohen, I have this medication I would like you to take.' And Mr. Cohen looks at it, and he crumples it up, and he says, 'No. No, I don't think so.' " Arlow paused for a few seconds to reflect on his own situation. "O.K., I'll get over it," he said. Another pause. "And I think when he sees it he'll see it's less impactful."



Before Mennillo left his office, Arlow said, "I'm not going to bring out anything that doesn't look great. I promise you that. I'm not going to be a total whore."

Mennillo worked at the computer through lunch. He did one comp that included Lenin's tomb, but with much less tomb and much more bottle. He did another of two soldiers, seen from shoulders to boot tops, with a bottle between them. He brought the comps to Arlow's office. Looking at them, Arlow stared at the two large soldiers and shook his head in wonder.

"I'll tell you, he may be fucking right—Michel," he said. "In terms of power, this is a stronger image. Here's Michel again. What can I tell you? The guy's got a fucking instinct."

A few moments later, Roux entered the office. "Mr. Roux is right again," Arlow greeted him. "I hate you. You make me feel like a piece of shit."

Roux looked at the comp of two big soldiers and smiled. "There you are," he said.

"Did I tell you?" Arlow joked. "Replace the dogs with soldiers."

Still scrutinizing it, Roux said, "Here you are saying something."

"It doesn't have the elegance," Arlow said, "but it has the striking power."

Manni, the account director, walked in and examined the new comps.

"Strong," Arlow said.

"Powerful," Manni said.

"Let that be the beginning, and we go

on to different things," Arlow said to Roux. "Have a good trip. *Gai gezunt.*"

After Roux left, Arlow gestured jubilantly. "I'm happy," he said. "I was miserable this morning. I'm happy this afternoon. That's the way this crazy business works."

The institutionalized version of what Arlow scorned as "the secretary test" is the focus-group evaluation. Advertising people usually loathe and fear focus groups. Clients typically insist on them. At Carillon, Roux is not much interested in focus groups. He likes to say that the initial market research conducted on Absolut by Al Singer, who was the president of Carillon when Roux was still its vice-president for sales, indicated that the brand would be a bust. However, both Capria and his immediate superior, Dick McEvoy, who is the senior vice-president for sales and marketing, believe in focus groups. McEvoy and Capria started out at Seagram. Within Carillon, they represent a down-to-earth, liquor-salesman sensibility that often counterbalances Roux's impulsive Gallic flair. Neither McEvoy nor Capria was convinced that the "Freedom of Vodka" tag line for the Stolichnaya base brand would mean anything to consumers. Before the ads were finally approved, they demanded a test with focus groups. The tests were held, in New York and Los Angeles, while Roux was abroad.

A week in advance, Arlow and Donaher met with Robert Beller, the marketing consultant who was organizing the tests, and his wife, Joan. Robert Beller, who was dressed in a pin-striped suit and a button-down blue shirt, has a receding hairline and a graying goatee. He is a Robert Bork look-alike. He did most of the talking, while Joan, a slender woman with short reddish-brown hair, took notes. Donaher explained that he wanted to know what consumers thought the ads were communicating. He didn't care so much whether they liked the ads. "My biggest fear is that Americans, when they're asked to look at something, feel that to appear smart they have to be critical," he said.

"If we had focus-grouped van Gogh and Picasso, we would never have had their art," Arlow said. "It's always said that creative people don't want their work to be judged. That's not true. But I want the work judged by the right people. I don't always find the people at the groups to be the right people. After a year, they'll love it." Once the Bellers had left, he said to me, "I'm so afraid. This became like a necessity in our business. Originally, it was called a disaster check. Is there something we didn't think of? Like 'Did you know that means "Fuck you" in Hindustan?' But then it became more sophisticated and more important." Although the Stoli base brand was targeted for a somewhat less august group than Cristall, it was still a premium vodka, and Arlow suspected that the focus groups might be too unsophisticated to appreciate his campaign.

As an example of what he dreaded, he told me about a television commercial he once produced for a perfume by Oscar de la Renta. "Perfume is magic," he said. "We started on a field with a little white house in the Hamptons. Most of the picture was sky, and it was storming—thunder and rain and lightning bolts. Then we went inside. It was a cottage, but an elegant cottage, very Martha Stewart, not a shack. Then you saw a woman in a negligee and she went to her vanity table and picked up a bottle of perfume and put a little here." He touched the skin behind his ears. "And then you see the sky and it slowly starts to clear, and then you see a rainbow. It was so *beautiful.* And it had a clear message, but in a sophisticated way. So we bring it to the focus group, and the first comment is"—here his voice changed to that of an old, querulous Jewish woman—" 'I don't know, I put on perfume when it's raining and nothing like this happens, there's no rainbow.' " His eyes filled with pain at the memory. "The client killed it. *Killed* it."

The first test of the "Freedom of Vodka" campaign was held in midtown at 6 P.M. on June 20th in a gray-walled, gray-carpeted double room divided by a one-way mirror. Along with the Bellers were Arlow, Donaher, Manni, and a few junior people from Margeotes, and McEvoy, Capria, and Patricia Barroll from Carillon. A side table held a buffet dinner of chicken breasts and grilled vegetables, soft drinks and coffee, and plates of cookies. On the other side of the one-way mirror, as the lights went down in the auditors' room, four men and four women filed into a similar space, where sandwiches were offered. They were being paid fifty dollars for their time. All were middle-class professionals between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-four, and all of them occasionally drank Stoli. (At 8 P.M., a group of Absolut drinkers was tested.) Beller questioned them on their liquor tastes, their drinking habits, their magazine preferences. Then he took out six "Freedom of Vodka" comps, and, for the first time, the listeners in the dark behind the mirror really listened. Arlow fidgeted. McEvoy leaned forward in his seat. The only sounds were the hum of an air-conditioner and the patter of Joan Beller transcribing on a PowerBook.

"I'd like to hear from each of you what this says to you," Beller said.

"It's the choice to choose your own vodka," the first respondent said. Arlow punched the air in victory.

"It's Russia and all that's happening in Russia," a woman said. "There's freedom and rights for individuals."

The answers continued.

"They're saying, 'We're a classic Russian vodka, but you should drink us, too.' Maybe even a younger generation."

McEvoy turned toward Arlow and nodded encouragingly.

"It says we can finally get our hands on this vodka. And ten years ago we were boycotting Stoli. It's saying that that's all over."

"My first reaction was an art-historical reaction, because a lot of these images are taken directly from the early Soviet Constructivist era. It's a cheeky kind of intelligent parody, because consumer products are being trumpeted instead of ideology."

Arlow and Capria shook their heads in disbelief at this erudition. Beller

MAYBE WE SHOULD NOT ADVERTISE IT AT ALL.

asked the panel to write down on a pad what "Freedom of Vodka" meant to them. He then had them read their interpretations of the phrase.

"It's almost that you can choose other brands, but this is the one you should choose."

"It's still dripping. It's so new and fresh it's like they just put it on there."

"I must have paid them," Arlow whispered, in astonishment. "I can't believe it." It was like the first preview of a Broadway comedy, with the audience laughing at every joke.

"You didn't ride up in the elevator with them?" Manni said.

After an hour of this, the agency people were having trouble sustaining their attention, but McEvoy and Capria continued to hang on every word. When the group was dismissed and the lights went back up, McEvoy said, "Amazing group. Incredibly well informed. There are usually one or two duds in a group. There were no duds in this group." Then, turning to Arlow, McEvoy changed the subject. "When are you doing the first Cristall shot?" He meant the photograph through crystal for the "Flawless" campaign that Arlow had hoped was dead.

"It'll cost at least ten thousand dollars," Arlow said.

"Spend it," McEvoy said.

"I want you to see the other campaign," Arlow said.

"I've seen it."

"The soldiers," Arlow said.

"I've seen them."

McEvoy never wavered in his allegiance to the "Flawless" campaign. Here was another instance of the client who falls in love with the pitch, to the agency's chagrin. For McEvoy, the mission was to introduce Stolichnaya Cristall as the world's finest, most expensive vodka. He thought that the word "flawless" in conjunction with a gorgeous picture would accomplish that. Because the "Flawless" campaign, unlike the others, depended entirely on execution, he felt that it needed to be photographed to be judged properly. But Arlow and Manni feared that once the money was spent the die would be cast: Carillon would feel committed to "Flawless."

The day after his conversation with McEvoy, Arlow sat at his desk, looking at the "Flawless" comp of a well-dressed woman photographed through a crystal. "I find this is too gemlike," he said. It was true that the cut and faceted stone in the photograph looked nothing like the hexahedral quartz crystal he had on his desk. "And I'm shooting through a crystal, supposedly, but I don't know to what effect. I don't know what the crystal is doing for me other than giving me a mnemonic for Cristall. I have an idea. I think we would have to use something that is imperfect, like this crystal—that isn't gemlike. Say we had a photograph of a Martini glass, a simple photograph, but beautifully done, printed in tones of gray. On top of this photograph I would lay a real piece of crystal and photograph it. Then I would take another piece of crystal and photograph over that. Where those two pieces of crystal crossed would be the light, bright part of the picture. The place where it's just one crystal would be less bright, and the rest, without any crystal, would be too dark. By crystal over crystal I'm creating the brightest and purest. So the crystal is working to get something done." He called in Laura Karetzky, outlined his idea, and asked her to develop it. Although he still didn't want to invest in a photographer to shoot the image, he was resigning himself to the possibility that he would have to show comps of two campaigns—"Nothing Comes Close" and "Flawless"—to focus groups. He thought McEvoy would insist on it.

At the end of the week, a phone call from Roux in Europe threw everything back into play. The Grand Met executives had seen "Nothing Comes Close," and they didn't get it. According to Roux, they said, "Look, you can do what you want. But what happened to 'Flawless'?" Because Roux was taking a vacation in his country house in Provence, and McEvoy was about to embark on an Alaskan cruise, Arlow had two weeks in which to create a new "Flawless" campaign. Much as Arlow hated to admit it, "Nothing Comes Close" was close to dead. "I wanted to have a nice weekend this weekend," he said ruefully. "It's like a seesaw. Roll with the punches." He called Karetzky back in. With the "Flawless" campaign abruptly shifted to the front burner, he needed a senior copywriter to work with her. He went to Paul Opperman, the inventor of "Freedom of Vodka." Although Opperman was about to leave Margeotes for his new job, he said he would be happy to try his hand at it over the weekend.

Opperman is a second-generation adman; his father directed Speedy Alka-Seltzer commercials. Through a friend of his father's, Paul got a job at an ad agency soon after he graduated in English from Columbia College. Working first in the media department, then as an account executive, he was lucky enough to wind up at Margeotes when it was still so small that a young man could jump from the account side to the creative. In the advertising business, there's a clear divide between the "creative" types, who invent the campaigns, and the account people and media buyers, who minister to the clients and place the ads. Often, as at Margeotes, they work on different floors, but even in the elevator you can tell them apart. In the summer, the creatives will be wearing Bermuda shorts and Hawaiian shirts, or halter tops and linen slacks, or anything but a business suit.

Opperman has had an eccentrically checkered career: all-American diver, skateboard wizard, surfer, hip poet, record-company scout. Not surprisingly, he was much happier on the creative side of the agency. "Being an account guy, I would be really cranky," he told me. "People are always complaining to you. Being an account guy is one big apology. It's so un-fun it's ridiculous." He is enthusiastic about being a copywriter: "You sit there in a room with a friend of yours, you play loud music, and you say, 'Maybe we should use a dragon.' "

On Monday morning, Opperman was in the office uncharacteristically early. He looked a little bedraggled—he had been to hear a Japanese punk-rock band perform in the neighborhood the night before, didn't get out until 3 A.M., and decided to sleep at the office. Nonetheless, he had five campaigns to present, all of them based on the word "flawless." With Karetzky showing rough layouts, he presented his ideas in Arlow's office.

The first was a straightforward approach with more than a whiff of the Absolut campaign. Along with the obligatory bottle of Cristall, the layout depicted a Mozart manuscript under the headline "Flawless Symphony" and a blue sky with "Flawless Weather." "It's the sort of thing that could just go on and on forever," Opperman said.

The second campaign showed a group of empty glasses beside a bottle, with the line "Being flawless is hard work." A garbage can full of bottles bore the line "Being flawless can be thankless." Arlow didn't say anything. There was no way that Carillon would buy a campaign that featured the product in a garbage can.

"In this third one we set up a dichotomy," Opperman said. He read the copy line "Myron had an unnerving tendency to waver in critical moments." There was a picture of a bridegroom crossing his fingers at the altar, and above the picture was the word "Flaw." On the other side was a bottle of Cristall and the word "Flawless." Opperman explained that the campaign could also use objects, like a chipped Ming vase, or style gaffes, like a man's crossed leg showing skin above his sock.

Arlow's eyes lit up. He was getting excited. "This is so much better for me," he said. "What I like about this is that 'Flawless' is so much an ultimate that a sophisticated person can't take it that seriously. Here the humor is like fresh air that comes into a room. But I'm not sure if they will think that this tends to de-chic it. If we started with examples that were very chic, it might be a way to sell them on this idea."

Opperman's fourth campaign was based on perfect moments, like "On August 3, 1903, Enrico Caruso gave a flawless performance of 'Il Vagabondo' at the Met." He had a list of examples, some historical and some imaginary.

"In their thinking, I think this would fill the bill more, because it's what I call phony chic," Arlow said.

"It's borrowed interest," Opperman agreed.

Still, Arlow preferred it to the first, "Flawless Symphony" or "Flawless Weather" campaign.

"To me it's the same thing," Opperman said.

"But with another wrinkle." They tossed around different moments that might be memorialized. "The more obscure the better," Opperman said.

Arlow looked back at the roughs of the previous offering, "Flaw-Flawless." "The thing I like about this is that it can go into different magazines, just as Absolut does," he said. The Absolut campaign was readily tailored to fit different publications. In the ad business, if a campaign lends itself to a broad variety of executions it is said to be "poolable."

"Also, it becomes a game," Opperman said. "For me, the reason Absolut has always worked is that it's a what's-next kind of game."

"Help me with this," Arlow said. "If our main campaign for Stolichnaya is up against Absolut, how does this one seem to be above that?"

"It has to be impeccably art-directed," Opperman said.

Arlow nodded, but he was still unsure.

Opperman then showed the fifth, and final, campaign, which took off from Arlow's notion of overlapping crystals. One sketch had two people looking in different directions. A crystal was emerging from each of their heads. Where the crystals overlapped was a graphic representation of an idea. The line: "When distilled through crystal, all things become clear." In another version, a man and woman were romantically attracted. Puffs of steam rose where the crystals overlapped.

"It's too many things," Arlow said. "People, crystals, bottles. It's too complicated."

Opperman agreed. "I want to know which you think are viable," he said.

Arlow said that "Flaw-Flawless" could work with "highly sophisticated treatments," and "Flawless Moments" had possibilities if the moments were more entertaining. Those were the best.

After Opperman and Karetzky left, Arlow was enthusiastic about "Flaw-Flawless." "I think it's wonderful," he said. "It doesn't have the incredible sophistication that this might have." He pointed to the "Nothing Comes Close" comp of Lenin's tomb. "Making the bottle hero above everything else. But it could be wonderful."

He walked to Opperman's office to impart a final piece of advice. "When I said 'elegant,' what I really mean are things that are virtually magnificent except for one slight flaw. What's on the left should be beautiful except for one tiny thing wrong with it. That'll give us the sophistication we need."

With Opperman's help, Karetzky, in her windowless cubicle, was soon looking through magazines for swipe art. They were seeking only the poshest of flaws. Opperman had proposed a magnificent mansion with a Winnebago parked in front of it. Arlow thought the Winnebago was "a little obvious"; he suggested a cheap lawn chair and a tacky grill. Those wouldn't be hard to find. What they needed, though, for another execution of the campaign, was a swank table setting that they could slightly derange.

"We want to be subtle, but we don't want to be barking up our butts," Opperman said. "Maybe we should go back to a vase and do a Ming vase, except on the bottom it's stamped 'Made in Japan.' "

"Everybody has done a Ming vase," Karetzky said. "Even today, on television there was a Range Rover ad and the butler had broken a Ming vase."

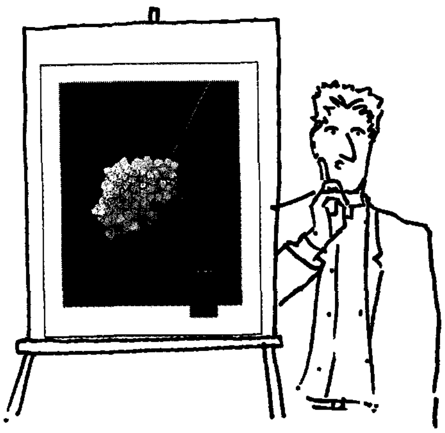
Opperman kept looking for the right setting, but he was not at all sure that people would notice if he placed the fork on the right. "The only people who know this shit are butlers," he said. "I think conceptually this is flawed."

In another cubicle, Tom Mennillo was working with a new freelance writer, Susan Lieber. Although he was disappointed that his "Nothing Comes Close" campaign had fallen out of favor, he was gamely trying something new. He was looking through picture books of Russian architecture to find settings for monumental bottles of Cristall. Arlow thought that the idea had possibilities. "These places have an incredible adherence to detail, which is another analogy to 'flawless,' " he said. Mennillo showed him a photograph of an elaborate eighteenth-century cut-glass chandelier. Lieber read him her copy: "Thirty-six hundred crystals. And that's just to filter the vodka."

Arlow chuckled. He sent her off to write some more ads.

ACCORDING to federal law, to carry the label "vodka" a beverage must consist of "neutral spirits so distilled . . . as to be without distinctive character, aroma, taste, or color." One night, I took Arlow and his wife, Susan Gray-Arlow, out to dinner and asked the waitress to serve each of us a glass of Absolut, a glass of Stoli, and a glass of Cristall on the rocks, without identifying them. We were curious to see whether we could detect a difference. We could. One was very thick, with a slight citrus fragrance; we all thought that it was Absolut. Another was extremely smooth and had no taste whatsoever. We guessed that it was the Stoli base brand. The third was somewhere between the two in viscosity, with a delicate aftertaste. We all agreed that it was Cristall. That was the one we got right. We had reversed Absolut and Stoli.

A week later, at a beach house, I ran the same test with a dozen people. This time, the votes fragmented more or less evenly. People could taste a difference. What they disagreed on was which was better. Most people thought that what turned out to be Absolut was tasteless, but that was exactly the quality that some of them were seeking in a vodka. Of course, if I had served the vodka with mixers these nuances would have been indiscernible. Even without mixers, the vodkas were not distinctive enough to dictate a shared preference.



IT was arranged that the Margeotes team would travel to Teaneck on the morning of July 6th, a Wednesday, to show Roux and his executives at Carillon the new ideas for Cristall. On Tuesday afternoon, Arlow assembled the artwork for the various campaigns in his office. He wanted Fertitta to review them, but he wanted Manni, the account director, to get on board first. There was "Nothing Comes Close," "Flawless Moments," "Flaw-Flawless," "Russian Rooms," and "Crystal" (as everyone now called the shoot-through-crystal "Flawless" campaign). They were comps, but they were very "tight." To the casual eye, all looked like finished ads except the double-crystal sketches of "Crystal."

Arlow was jittery. Like many good advertising people, he tends to express himself through analogies. When he's under pressure, the analogies pour out as if a spigot had burst. "There are a dozen people standing around and they've taken blood and cardiograms and heard all the opinions, and they're ready to operate and one person has to wield the knife," he said. "I think this is all the nervousness before naming the child. We've got five names. We've got to see what the name's going to be, and then it will be all right."

Manni entered, admired the comps, and asked Arlow which campaign he preferred.

"If I had to speak now from my heart of hearts, I would say that 'Flaw-Flawless' is the best campaign," he said. " 'Nothing Comes Close' is just one act—the act of protection. It doesn't have the same legs. With 'Flaw-Flawless' you can do an incredible number of things."

George Fertitta entered. Arlow showed him the comps and gave a brief description of each campaign. When he got to the last one, he said, "In my opinion, it's a mistake to go with a picture shot through a crystal. We have to be more sophisticated than Absolut and get the high-end Absolut drinker to want to try something else. But I think McEvoy at the meeting will probably stick with what he wanted."

"Let me digest it and see what priorities I think we should have," Fertitta said. He was not ready to endorse a campaign.

Paul Donaher came into the office. He looked at all the campaigns and pointed out that an advantage of "Crystal" was that it was "ownable."

"It's ownable in getting Cristall across," Arlow said. "I wonder if it's sophisticated and hot enough to get people to try Cristall."

Donaher thought that, if a good photographer was called in, the campaign might develop a distinctive visual style.

"My fear is that that is going with sophistication à la what sophistication used to be," Arlow said. "Sophistication used to be horse-drawn carriages for people in top hats and evening dresses. I just don't think it's going to take someone who's drinking Absolut and get him to go one step further." He pointed to the "Crystal" comps, and said, "This is not in the vocabulary of the Absolut drinker." He pointed to the "Flaw-Flawless" comps. "And this is. This is."

"I think it's important that we look at this holistically," Donaher said. He described fragrance campaigns in which the photographer's image fleshed out concepts that were in themselves unremarkable.

"That for me is always a weak advertising premise," Arlow said. "If I have to hope that someone is going to make the most beautiful picture in the world, I don't have much to lean on. I feel very fragile. With Stolichnaya original, when we just had the art it wasn't saying anything until Paul Opperman, God bless him, came up with 'Freedom of Vodka,' and that made it emotional. The art, in a sense, is secondary, although I know that Carillon doesn't believe that, and Michel, especially, doesn't believe that."

Donaher reviewed the "Flaw-Flawless" comps and frowned. "I hate the ba-dum, ba-dum quality of it," he said.

"It's playful," Arlow said. "It's not taking ourselves seriously. It's funny."

"But I don't think it's funny that someone set the table wrong," Donaher said.

"It's a game. I think people will wait from issue to issue to see what the flaw will be. I don't think they'll be waiting to see what the next crystal shot will be."

UNDERSTAND THAT THIS SCRIPT WILL BE IN GOLD.
MORE RICH.
MUCH MORE RICH.

"I don't think this is about waiting," Fertitta said. "This is about experiencing."

"What's the difference?" Arlow said. "If you like something and are intrigued by it, you want to see the next one."

"I keep saying, *There's* the flaw, *there's* the flawless," Donaher said. "Ba-dum, ba-dum."

"It's extremely advertising, it's extremely directive," Arlow conceded. "Red light, green light."

"I think if we can tone down the ba-dum, ba-dum, it's better," Donaher said.

Arlow suggested shrinking the typeface of the words "flaw" and "flawless." "Would that be better for you?"

"Yeah," Donaher said. "It doesn't solve the whole thing, but it would be better."

"The big issue on this brand is no awareness," Manni said.

"I just think pretty isn't going to save the day," Arlow said.

"I think it's not about pretty," Donaher said. "It's about two things. It's about owning a visual style." As he elaborated on this notion, he was interrupted by a phone call, and left, never saying what the second thing was.

Arlow called in Mennillo. Karetzky was on vacation, so he asked Mennillo to revise her comps in the "Flaw-Flawless" campaign. "What people don't like about this campaign is what they call the 'ba-dum, ba-dum,' " he said. They discussed typographic ways to tone down the contrast. Then Arlow looked at the "Crystal" comps. "On these, there are a lot of people who want to go into crystal," he said. "They're saying that the experience of looking through crystal is a mnemonic for these things. George is thinking that way, and once McEvoy jumps in I don't know what's going to happen." After Mennillo left, he sighed. "If you come from a dysfunctional family, you'd fit in in advertising," he said.

FERTITTA led the Margeotes team to Teaneck the following morning. Before departing, they looked at the revisions that Mennillo had supervised overnight. Fertitta said that all the comps were improved.

"So, agency recommendation?" Manni said.

"I know they're going to want to test 'Crystal,' " Arlow said. "McEvoy is very much attached to that. For the other one, I would go with 'Flaw-Flawless.' It has the new kind of sophistication."

Fertitta didn't say anything.

When they got to Carillon, Fertitta took Arlow aside and whispered in his ear, "Read the copy slowly. It's beautiful copy."

In the conference room, an assistant account executive set up an easel for Arlow and stood the comps on the floor with their faces to the wall. Each would be raised at the moment that Arlow, the impresario, thought right. When Roux entered the room, it was like the curtain going up on a play.

"So you have new things for me?" Roux said.

"Lots of stuff, Michel," Arlow said.

"I'm going to like it?"

After a brief introduction by Manni, Arlow began by describing a tasting of Absolut, Stolichnaya, and Stolichnaya Cristall in which—the government definition of vodka nothwithstanding—everyone could tell a difference. He then wrote "Absolut" on the easel and wrote down the three qualities that he believed distinguished it. "First, it's got to be called 'Clever,' " he said. "No. 2, 'Current.' It's become part of our society. No. 3, 'Contemporary.' Absolut changed the name of sophistication in the liquor business."

He then moved to a discussion of the Stolichnaya base brand. "Absolut is outselling Stoli three to one," he said. "How do we change that? Where Absolut is clever, current, contemporary, it's not emotional. We've addressed that in our campaign for Stoli original, with 'Freedom of Vodka.' It's for people who are excited about what's going on in the world. What the original-brand campaign also has going for it is it's more vibrant. You can't look at the art without getting excited. And the third thing is it's authentic. In Russia, the vodka business is like the car business in the United States. And the good thing is we're looking authentic without slamming anybody in the teeth. I think we have a damned good battle here, a damned good case, and I think the focus groups bore that out." Roux was not yet protesting impatiently, but he was looking down at the table.

"The reason I'm doing this is to focus on Cristall," Arlow said. "I think we have to be as original with Cristall as we are with Stolichnaya original. We have to be more sophisticated." He wrote that word on the easel. "More expensive. When I say more expensive, I mean the page should look more expensive than Absolut. It has to look like it's worth five or six dollars more a bottle than Absolut. And more special—not bullshit special but starting to talk about how it's made. We're going to go into the triple-filtered story, because I feel that this customer, if he's so sophisticated, he wants to be paying for a reality. The triple filtration will give us ammunition to convince people that we're really special. If I'm emotional, I'll go here." He pointed to the words he had written under Stolichnaya original. "If I want to impress, if I want the finest vodka, I'll go here. We started with 'the ultimate.' You remember, Michel?" Roux displayed no external signs of recognition, or of anything else. "But we got away from that because it was backslapping. We thought, What is it that makes it the best vodka? We ended up with 'Flawless,' which we think is wonderful, and you'll see it in everything we show you. When we deal with 'Flawless,' we need to do it in a clever, current, contemporary way."

He took out the comps of the elegant woman photographed through crystal with a large label as the backdrop. "This is the first time you saw the idea of 'Flawless,' " Arlow said. "What this allows us to do is develop a mnemonic, so that every time anyone sees a crystal and something shot through it they'll know it's Cristall."

"We should point out that these are not executed, and to do this campaign it has to be shot," Fertitta interrupted.

"Right," Arlow said. "We took this idea and took it one step further." He showed the sketches of crystal on top of crystal over a photograph of a Martini glass. "What happens here is where the crystals cross, the picture becomes the most beautiful, the clearest, the brightest. Do you understand?"

"Is that not very close to what Smirnoff is doing?" Roux asked. The Smirnoff campaign depicts scenes (one is of Antarctic penguins) with a clear vodka bottle behind which the view changes (a penguin is wearing a tuxedo).

"There you're looking through their bottle, Michel. Here it's through crystal. But there is a similarity. By the time it was done, you'd be looking at something very beautiful and you'd be understanding the point of double quartz filtration."

"How can this communicate a brand which has practically no awareness?" Roux asked.

"You'd definitely have to read something. It's a little bit of an education, because you'd have to tell people about crystal filtration and that's why it's better. I'm gonna leave that one aside now and go to the next one. Remember, I've got to attract that person." He gestured toward the words "clever, current, contemporary" he'd written on the easel about Absolut.

"I'm not sure you're right about that," McEvoy said.

"Do you want to say more on that, Dick?" Fertitta asked.

"I'll say it later," McEvoy said.

Arlow then went through the evolution of the "Nothing Comes Close" campaign. The comps he was showing had now been colorized, because Arlow felt they had been handicapped as black-and-whites.

"And we know that there were comments made, Ernie, when you saw the work," Fertitta said to Capria.

"Ernie did not like the dogs," Roux said drolly.

Arlow then presented the "Flawless Moments" campaign. The executions were of a pas de deux and a day in the Maldives. "What we should get down today is the concept," he said. "We can change the examples if you don't like ballet, for example."

"And looking forward to some testing," Fertitta said.

"Any questions so far?" Arlow asked.

"When you're finished," Roux said.

The next campaign was "Flaw-Flawless," and Arlow drew himself up a bit, like a coloratura ready for the big aria. "Can sophistication and humor coexist?" he said. "I think so. The people we're talking to may wear black tie, but they also wear jeans in the Village." He showed the comp of a large mansion. On the driveway were a lawn chair and a grill that had been swiped from a cheap advertisement flyer. "Even in the most beautiful things in life there is usually one flaw. Compared to our one little thing, which is flawless. This shows the most beautiful home in the world, the home of everyone's dreams, very sophisticated, and in front of it is a two-dollar-and-sixty-five-cent beach chair and a grill from Caldor that costs four-twelve. Somehow there's a disconnect. It says 'Flaw.' " He turned to the next comp in the campaign. "This shows the most elegant man you've ever seen in your life in the most elegant room, in front of a portrait of his ancestor, and he has his legs crossed, and because his sock is too short you can see his leg showing. Flaw."

"Your socks are very short, too," Roux said, with a smile. Arlow was wearing loafers without socks.

"My socks today are so short they don't exist," Arlow said, and then he went back to the pitch. "We could do the game, Michel, that you invented. This could be *HG* and *Architectural Digest*, and this could be *Esquire* and *GQ*, and this"—here he unveiled the bungled place setting—"could be in the food magazines. This is the most elegant place setting you've ever seen in your life, but the knives and forks are on the wrong side. What can happen in this campaign as it plays out is that in two years you can see a picture and you can have all the people in New York, California, and Chicago calling each other and saying, 'Did you see the flaw in that picture?' "

He finished by showing the fifth campaign, of the great Russian rooms with extraordinary attention to detail and a giant bottle of Stolichnaya Cristall taking center stage in each. Then he recapped and sat down.

"So, Ernie, do you want to give your comments?" Roux said.

"Why don't we hear the agency's recommendation first, and then hear what everyone has to say?" McEvoy suggested.

"I know what the agency likes," Roux said.

"I'm not sure you do, Michel," Arlow said. "My opinion is based not on what's nicest or prettiest but on, I hope, strategic thinking. We have to appeal in a way that's clever, contemporary, current. If I had to send something out to the press tomorrow, it would be this." He pointed to "Flaw-Flawless." "The word 'flawless' would be part of the vodka's image."

"That's my favorite, also," Patricia Barroll, Carillon's marketing-communications director, volunteered. "It involves the reader. We have to be very careful. The first one reminds me of the Lotto ads"—she was thinking of an ad of a lottery winner barbecuing in front of his baronial home. "We can't underestimate the reader. My favorite is the place setting."

The room turned to Capria. "That's probably one of the best ones," he said, referring to "Flaw-Flawless." "I think you need authenticity. You could do that by doing some Russian scenes."

It was McEvoy's turn. He leaned back, as though he were going to be speaking for a long time. "I think you did a wonderful job with the original Stoli," he said. "I don't think you want to be like Absolut. When we started with Absolut, you'll remember I said, 'This is the greatest aspirational society in the history of mankind, and what we have to say is "indulgence" and "aspiration." ' Over fifteen years, we took it off that pedestal a little. This is a twenty-dollar bottle of vodka. I don't think that this campaign says that this bottle costs six dollars more than Absolut. There is a campaign that says that in my mind, and that's the first one."

"Actually, twenty-eight dollars a bottle," Fertitta said. (No one at either Carillon or Margeotes seemed to have a precise idea of what a bottle of Cristall actually costs in a liquor store.)

Everyone turned to the one person from Carillon who had not spoken—Michel Roux.

"I think we're not there yet," he said. "My feeling is that at the beginning we want to create awareness through the visual and through your triple filtration. I think we may have to do a spread where one page describes and the other gives you the visual."

Fertitta suddenly spoke. "I want to come back to the one that Dick and I like," he said, indicating the comp of the label behind the woman seen through crystal. "We haven't shot it yet, so it's hard to tell what it could be. And where do you have an opportunity to have Stolichnaya Cristall written that big?"

"We need at the beginning to explain to the consumer," Roux said.

"But at the beginning you have to think of the middle and the end," Arlow said. He was drifting into no man's land, between his client and his boss.

"Your problem with this, Arnie, is you don't see this as terribly campaign-worthy," McEvoy said, joining in Fertitta's pitch for the "Crystal." "It's rich. It's elegant."

"All I know is that there's a brand out there, Absolut, that gives people satisfaction, that they're proud to drink, that's a badge," Arlow said. "I want to break that. And I don't think a big label is going to do that."

"Let's work it a little more," Roux said.

"Can I just ask one thing?" Fertitta said. He wanted a sale, and he wasn't giving up so easily. "What do we want the reader to take away. In two words. Or three words."

"The better vodka," Capria said.

"More expensive," McEvoy said.

Roux shrugged when Fertitta looked at him. "I don't know," he said. He wasn't about to play a game where someone else made up the rules.

"It's a superior product," McEvoy said, amending his response.

"I am telling you, I'm not seeing anything which strikes me," Roux said.

Fertitta pointed out that Roux had taken the "Nothing Comes Close" comps to Budapest. "What did you like about this?" he asked.

"I liked the being guarded, the being kept away almost from the consumer," Roux said.

Fertitta mentioned that developing the "Crystal" campaign would cost money.

"Shoot it," McEvoy said. "Spend five grand and do it."

Arlow still resisted. "My problem with that is you'll get a more beautiful picture, but all you have is a beautiful picture and a label, and no reason to make a change," he said.

"So make it better," McEvoy said.

"But what I'm saying is, all you'll have is a pretty picture," Arlow repeated. "It doesn't give me a badge to make me want to switch."

"So make it better," McEvoy repeated.

"What I'm saying is that you can't give the consumer a reason to switch with that campaign," Arlow said.

"You're telling me that soldiers and big Martini glasses are better?" McEvoy said.

"Yes."

"I disagree. Indulgence, aspiration, fashion. None of them say that to me."

"I'm saying that I can see this campaign getting people to switch," Arlow said. "I just bought a four-by-four vehicle, a Land Rover Discovery. When I take that car on the road, I feel just as sophisticated as the people in Jaguars and Porsches. In the nineties, there's a different level of sophistication. It doesn't mean only rich and beautiful. It can mean better and solid. We're not selling a Rolls-Royce. People don't have to save up thousands to buy this. This"—he pointed to the "Crystal" comp—"is an older campaign. This"—he pointed to "Flaw-Flawless"—"is a younger campaign that's talking with wit and sophistication."

Fertitta spoke up. "I think from an introduction point of view—and I know Arnie and I don't agree on this—there's something to be said for being captured by the beautiful image that makes you think this is a very special product, and you're washed in emotion."

Almost to himself, Roux muttered, "Maybe we should not advertise it at all."

"Can I make one final appeal?" Arlow said. "What we're looking at on the table is one against one. When you're looking at three or four or five, this one"—he pointed to the "Crystal"—"is beautiful and beautiful, and that's all it is. It doesn't go anywhere. This one"—he pointed to "Flaw-Flawless"—"you can keep upping the ante."

Roux did not respond.

Fertitta tried the opposite approach. "You can start with an idea now and then develop it as the campaign goes along," he said. "You've been in the mode of doing a pool-out idea, but you may want to launch the campaign with something else, to build product awareness."

Roux did not respond. The group talked for a bit about Cristall ideas.

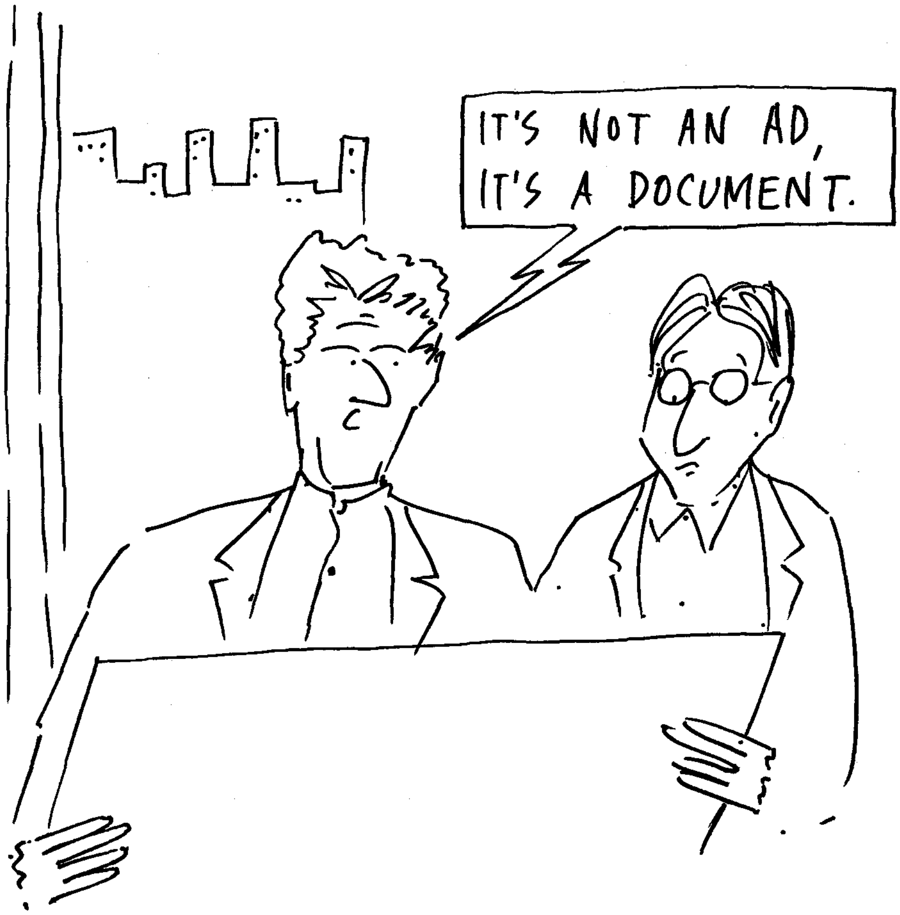
"Do you have enough to take back with you?" McEvoy asked.

"Two things," Manni said. "The first thing is we've got focus groups scheduled for Cristall on July 19th and July 21st."

"Cancel them," Capria said. There would be nothing ready by then.

"Second, do you want us to go ahead and shoot the 'Crystal' idea?"

As McEvoy was beginning to say yes, Roux interrupted. "First, I think you should come up with something which is improving on this, then you shoot," he said. "This is an unfinished job here."


IT'S NOT AN AD, IT'S A DOCUMENT.

• •

Fertitta left for another appointment, back in New York. The discussion then turned to the executions of "Freedom of Vodka" and the launch date for a Priviet campaign. No one knew if there would be money to advertise Priviet, and the Russians had been baffled and displeased by the "Embrace the Unknown" comps that depicted two gay men. Arlow didn't participate in this conversation. With a pungent-smelling black marker, he was sketching double-page spreads.

When the meeting broke up, Arlow walked off to an empty office. He was fuming about Fertitta. "That fucking George," he said. "He sold me down the river. How can I work for him? I had them on the ropes. Trish was for it. Ernie liked it. Dick was wavering. I had them on the ropes."

Before leaving, he stopped in Roux's private office and chatted briefly. Then he made the long, dispirited drive to New York.

BACK in his office at Margeotes, Arlow continued sketching double-page spreads with a large bottle on one side. Fertitta stopped in, having returned from his appointment. "Everything we showed him is a piece of advertising, and that's not enough," Arlow said of Roux. "He wants a blimp that says 'Cristall' coming out of the pages of the magazine. He wants to be excited. That's the tipoff." Arlow didn't say that he thought Fertitta had sold him down the river.

"I thought it was great that he was open to spreads," Fertitta said. "I see nothing wrong with launching it that way and then coming back with the campaign in 1995." He left.

Manni entered, having just returned from lunch in New Jersey with Capria. "I'm the last kid in on this, but they seem to have dug in their heels on 'Crystal,' and we may have to go ahead and shoot it," he said. "I know that the fear is that it'll look great and we'll wind up choosing a campaign that was not the best campaign."

"Exactly," Arlow said.

"The question is how to please everybody and still do the best we can for the brand," Manni said. "Maybe we come out of the box with one thing and follow up with a campaign. Somehow, you gotta make noise."

"You gotta do something that's never been done before," Arlow said. "Something so that people who see it say, 'That Roux, he did it again.' "

After Manni left, he said, "I know what we've got to do. We've got to come up with something that's not just a page of advertising. I know what we've got to do. I just don't know how to do it."

ARLOW asked Opperman, who had one more week at Margeotes, if he could create something that was not an ad but a "document." The idea was to "go against the grain of what people expect—'All vodka's the same,' 'It's just snob appeal,' 'It all has to do with the advertising.' " Over the weekend, Arlow attended a barbecue in Bridgehampton given by Donaher. Fertitta was among the agency people there. By the time Arlow returned to the office, on Monday, he had concluded that, even without Fertitta's intervention, Roux would never have bought the "Flaw-Flawless" campaign. Fertitta had not been selling him out. He had been making a last-ditch try for a sale. But neither Arlow nor Fertitta had perceived what Roux was looking for.

Opperman didn't arrive at the office on Monday until noon, but he came armed with executions of Arlow's ideas. "I was working on two things that we discussed," he told Arlow. "The first is that snob appeal in vodka actually has a basis with Cristall. The second is that people reading this should think, Holy shit, Michel Roux does it again! It has to be real in-your-face to stop you." He had written his copy lines on a large artist's pad, as one page of a two-page spread. The first version said "IGNORE THIS AD." In smaller type below, the copy continued, "Because all vodkas are the same, right? Nope, in fact there are huge differences." On the other side of the spread, below the picture of the bottle, he had written, "Different. Flawless. Vodka." The next version began "ALL VODKAS ARE THE SAME" and then denied it. He had other variations as well, in which the statement "All vodkas are the same" appeared in smaller type, followed by "NYET!" or "WRONG." He had one that said "The 90s way to be pretentious. Substance!" He had another that said "WARNING: This ad contains actual facts."

Arlow loved the "WARNING." "I would say 'This vodka ad' contains actual facts, not 'This ad,' " he advised. His old exuberance was back. "It's sensational," he said. "For years at TBWA, it was all sizzle. Absolut This, Absolut That. There's nothing there. To me this is like a hammer. It's fucking dynamite." After reading the line under the bottle—"Different. Flawless. Vodka."—he hesitated, then said, "This is so addy."

"Yeah, I'm a copywriter, man," Opperman said.

"I know, I know," Arlow said hastily. "And I hate it when people say, 'Oh, that's too advertising.' For me, I would put it this way." He crossed out the words "Different" and "Vodka." After the word "Flawless," he replaced the period with a question mark. "Let's ask it as a question," he said. "Because 'flawless' doesn't really exist in the world."

"I think that's really cool," Opperman said. "Punctuation. That's the kind of thing I'd like to try to sell but I never do, because I think they wouldn't want to buy it. 'Flawless?' It's a leading question."

"And I accept it much more as a consumer, because it isn't so pompous," Arlow said. He asked Tom Mennillo to work on layouts for "ALL VODKAS ARE THE SAME" and "WARNING." "It really should be balls out," he said, "and when people look at it they shouldn't say, 'That's pretty.' They should say, 'Fuck, that's effective.' "

Opperman left to write the body copy.

"He's made it alive," Arlow said. " 'All vodkas are alike.' It's not an ad, it's a document."

MUCH as Arlow loved "WARNING," he had to agree when Bob Manni told him that McEvoy would shoot it down in a second. The "Warning" on the back label of a liquor bottle is the hectoring voice of the government crimping the pleasure principle. It's not a word to highlight in a vodka ad. And Arlow, upon reflection, decided that it would be a mistake to put "All vodkas are the same" in large type, since a casual browser could go away thinking that that was the message. He compromised on the word "MYTH," to appear in a curlicued typeface similar to the script on the Cristall label. It was less exciting than "WARNING," but it was also less risky. On the other side he wanted "a magnificent, beautiful, slightly soft-focus photograph of the bottle on a simple black background." For the comp, he would use the photograph that had been taken for the aborted "gold ring" campaign at the beginning of this long march.

Once Mennillo had prepared a comp, Arlow showed it to Manni. "I think we've hit all the checks with Dick," Manni said. "It's upscale. They'll ask how long we can run this. I would say through '94 and then switch to a campaign. It's got a great look to it. I think you nailed it. Way to go." The congratulatory effect of the words was undercut by his worn-out voice. The real celebration would await the client's verdict.

Heading off to Teaneck at seven-thirty on the morning of July 14th, Arlow was not totally satisfied with the look of the comp. "This is still too meek and weak, but it gives them the concept," he said. "It's something I'm not totally crazy about, but I know the idea is right." He and Manni were presenting it on their own. In the car, Arlow said, "I'm not sure if I should show them the ad first, to establish a comfort level, or if I should do a buildup."

"I think if you show them the ad first they'll be only half listening when you tell them how you got there conceptually," Manni said.

"My only problem is, I do the whole buildup and then I show them this, an ad I'm not completely happy with."

"You say that this is where we are in the evolution process, and this was done overnight."

"Good, that's good," Arlow said. "You want to make the presentation?"

"He's gonna like it," Manni said reassuringly. "You want to stress the fact that we're going to make it as elegant and upscale as possible."

In his presentation to Roux, McEvoy, Capria, and Barroll, Arlow summarized the reasoning that had led to the double-page "document" and then showed the comp. "On the left-hand side is a magnificent picture of the bottle," he said. "Please understand, now, that this is a stand-in picture. The words also are not done the way I'm going to do it. This word 'Myth' is going to be done in the same script as Cristall—

very, very elegant. And then we'll have three simple paragraphs explaining the process." He read Opperman's text:

> All vodkas are the same. This is but a myth perpetuated by those who do not understand the actual art of making vodka. For there are huge differences in the quality of vodka. This is a spirit so refined that its production was entrusted by the Czars to the nobility as an honour. A spirit that was given by Catherine II as a state gift to Kant and Voltaire.
>
> And there is no vodka that can compare to the quality of Stolichnaya Cristall. Its purification process rises above all others. Every ounce is filtered over crystals of pure quartz rock, not once but twice. And in between these steps, it is filtered through granules of activated carbon made from native birch tree wood.
>
> Thus a spirit is born so pure that it has been called flawless. Cristall by Stolichnaya. Flawless.

After he finished reading, Arlow fingered the word "Myth," and said, "Understand that this script will be in gold."

"More rich," McEvoy said approvingly.

"Much more rich," Arlow said.

Roux stared silently at the comp, his lips pursed, his hands clasped.

" 'Flawless'—and I know how great 'flawless' is—always bothered me slightly," Arlow said. "Saying, 'We're flawless.' I never trust anybody who says that about himself. So what I'd like to say is 'Flawless?' With the question mark. That invites people to find out for themselves."

Roux shook his head. "You have a negative there," he said. "If somebody sees it and doesn't read . . ."

McEvoy agreed.

But that was a side issue. At last, Roux issued his judgment. "I personally like it," he said.

"I like the concept," McEvoy said. "I have a couple of little things." The body copy included the phrase "quartz rock." The word "rock," McEvoy thought, was "not rich."

These were quibbles. They had bought the ad.

"Then from there we will have a single-page campaign, where we will have a picture of a crystal," Roux said. Alarm flashed across Arlow's face. "Or whatever it is. I think it's a good entrance. Now I think we are giving the message right."

Behind Roux's back, Arlow shot a look of elation at Barroll.

"I would like to come back next week with ten versions of this, so you can choose one," Arlow said.

"Now we can talk to the magazines about getting one page free," Roux said.

Arlow and Manni left. In the flush of success, they could overlook the fact that they had sold a one-shot, not a campaign. Having produced an ad for Cristall for the critical holiday season, they could now, with the clock ticking more softly, try to come up with a full campaign that Roux would buy. They could, in short, ignore the fact that they were more or less back in the place where they had started.

In the car, Manni telephoned Fertitta at the office. "George?" he said. "Sold. Got a sale. We're on our way back." He hung up the phone.

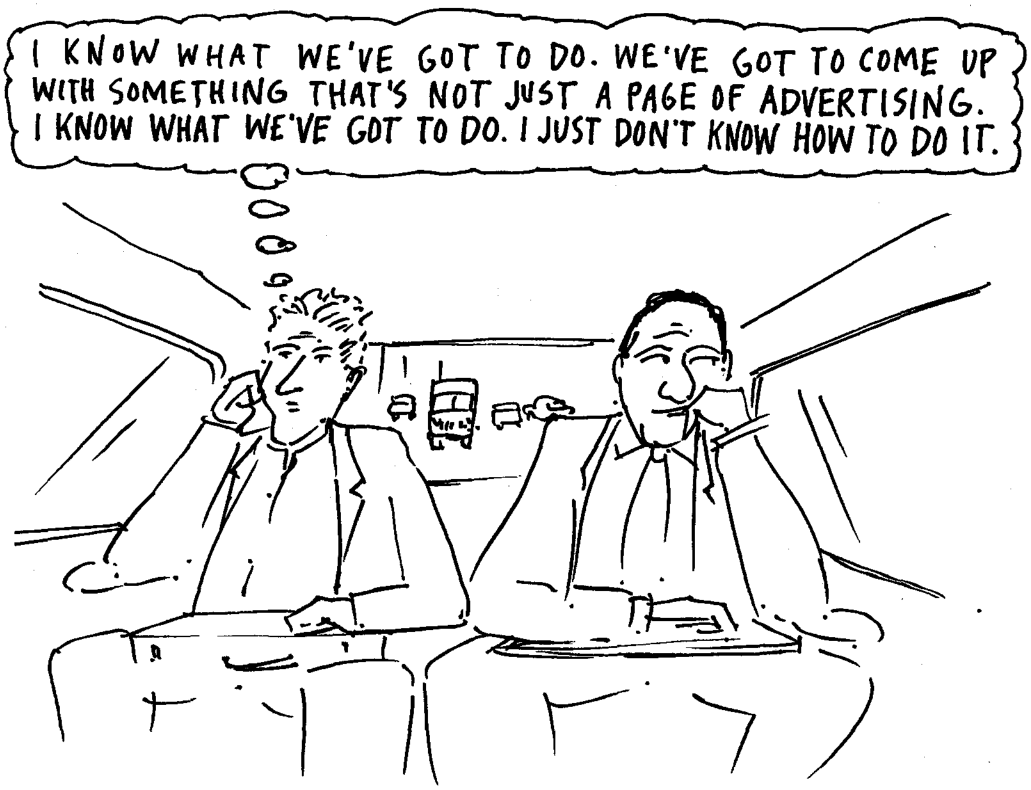
"You know, that's great," Arlow said, with his old enthusiasm. "Nine-thirty, people are waking up, we've already had a victory. We're on the way back."

A MONTH later, almost by accident, I learned that the Stoli base brand is also filtered twice through quartz crystals. What sets Cristall apart, apparently, is the use of virgin birch charcoal. The Margeotes team found this out after Carillon had approved the "document" ad headlined "Myth." The new information didn't change the campaign.

When I called Arlow at his weekend house in Amagansett, he said that he hadn't been unduly perturbed to learn that quartz-crystal filtration is not unique to Cristall. "It's not uncommon in advertising to take something and make it your cause célèbre even if you're not the only ones who do it," he said. "It's called taking a fact and preëmpting it. For Cristall, in terms of elevating it, we tried to announce the fact that it was filtered twice through quartz crystals. Is quartz crystal better than sand or charcoal? I don't know. One of the things on the back of my mind for a long time was why were quartz crystals so good? That was never clear to me. Certainly it sounded good."

"But you're not bothered that the campaign emphasizes crystal, which doesn't really set it above the Stoli base brand?" I asked.

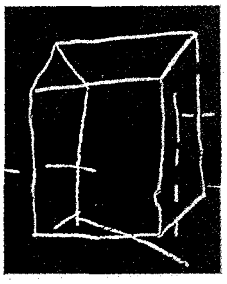
"No, not at all," he said. "No. 1, we're not deceiving anyone. This is the way it's made. We never say it's the *only* vodka produced this way." What mattered most was that a certain other vodka does not use quartz filtration. "I've said it a hundred times," he said. "The target for this brand is only one. It's called Absolut. If we beat Absolut by this approach, then we've accomplished what we're after." ◆


I KNOW WHAT WE'VE GOT TO DO. WE'VE GOT TO COME UP WITH SOMETHING THAT'S NOT JUST A PAGE OF ADVERTISING. I KNOW WHAT WE'VE GOT TO DO. I JUST DON'T KNOW HOW TO DO IT.

FICTION

WE TWO GROWNUPS

BY ALICE MATTISON



TODAY was the happiest day of my life so far, even though it didn't include actual sex or the World Series, and even though as usual people are suffering in places famous for trouble and also of course in every other place. I live with my parents—to save money—although as my mother puts it I am a grown man. I just filled my parents' dishwasher after dinner, wondering as I turned it on whether it really was the happiest day—because other days had more potential—but it was. I think that until today the happiest day was the day I went camping with my first girlfriend and we saw two deer and swam nude and made love on top of the sleeping bag, near the fire. Earlier happy days mostly included home runs. Dinner tonight was only meat loaf. Lunch was pizza. The happy part was in between.

I went to Wilbur Cross High School, in New Haven, where Ida Feldman, who had an old lady's name but was young and blond, though fat, was my English teacher junior year. One day, an administrator was talking on the public-address system, and he said, "Any seniors wishing to take the S.A.T.s should make an appointment with their penis." Ms. Feldman flopped forward on her desk and laughed, her arms wide, her hair spread out, as if she'd fallen off a dock with surprise and lay helpless in the water. Her face pressed into her grade book, so when she picked up her head there was a groove on her cheek from the spiral binding.

I loved her from then on. I majored in English at Southern Connecticut, almost in her honor, even though everyone was majoring in business. Two different deans asked me, "What are you going to do with *that*?" Whenever I visited Ms. Feldman she remembered me, but I wasn't as important to her as what she was doing right then. One time, she was trying to get a pregnant girl to stay in school and at least think about an abortion. "I wouldn't say it to her, Tom," she said quickly. "But I have to think of a way to let it cross her mind."

I hadn't thought much about abortion. "But it's her *baby*," I said.

"If I wanted her to abort her after-school job at Wendy's," she said, "I wouldn't be crying about it." I could see then that she did look blotchy. When I remember that day now, I know she was letting me right in, but then I was uncomfortable. I didn't stay and talk.

Ms. Feldman didn't look sexy, at least the way we think sexy women are supposed to look—she looked bouncy and dreamy at once, with her weight and her waist-length blond hair, and I'll argue now that this is precisely what we mean by sexy, but then I wouldn't have. But she always had to do with sex one way or another. Talking about literature in her class, we found sex everywhere, even the Gettysburg Address. But it was more than that. If spiders made love on a window at Cross, they'd pick Ms. Feldman's window.

When I got out of college I went to work for my brother-in-law. He's a contractor who builds additions to houses and does renovations. He's a noisy man. When he started going out with my sister, who was living at home, he always sat back too fast in the lounge chair at our house, late at night, so it crashed open. We'd sit up in bed and know Barbara had brought John home. At work he doesn't listen to the radio, but he drops things and sets boxes down hard, or lets go of an armful of two-by-fours half a foot off the floor. And he talks in a loud voice. From the first, if we were working on an addition to a house and the people were home, they heard me get instructed, because I knew nothing—John took me on out of kindness, or maybe he knew that English majors were meant to build additions. The first day, a woman was sitting in a rocker breast-feeding her baby next to the open window, and as I looked over John's shoulder into the window I could see the interest in her face when he explained loudly to me that he always cut outside the line and I must do the same, so our pieces of wood would be interchangeable.

"What line?" I said.

"The line you draw." He was using a temporary sawhorse he'd set up in this woman's back yard, and now he drew a fine pencil line where he needed to cut, and sure enough, he cut on the outside of the line, so it was just visible on the edge of the board. I could hardly pay attention. I wanted to look at the woman, maybe to go in and show her the line. Her baby was looking over his shoulder at me, too.

I did everything wrong the first few months with John, but he liked having me around anyway. "A college graduate like yourself," he'd begin, while we were hammering together. I learned to get nervous when he said that. "Tell me why a woman's nipples get brown if she nurses a baby," he said recently. So he'd been watching that woman, too—watching more closely than I'd been. I wouldn't talk about her. We'd finished that house long since, of course.

"I was an English major," I said.

"So you know about England?"

"I read a lot of American literature," I said. "Did you ever hear of Ezra Pound?"

He wasn't sure. I told him Pound was a good poet who made anti-Semitic broadcasts during the Second World War. "Now, do we forget the poetry because the man was wrong—or crazy; I guess people think he was crazy—or do we read the poems anyway?"

John talked about that one for days, dropping into a room where I was working alone to ask, "Are the poems against the Jews?" and "How good are they, anyway?" On the whole he thought we should not read Pound, but he could see arguments either way. Finally, he said I should show him a poem by Pound. I didn't know what had made me think of Pound. I hadn't read much of his work. I said I'd find my Norton anthology and have something copied.

John and I also talked about sex. "There's a year in everybody's life when

FILIP PAGOWSKI

all you think about is sex," he said, implying that I was in it. "Then you remember it's not the only thing."

"When you're young," he said to me more than once, "sex comes by itself, but as you get older, it sneaks into things and things sneak into it." Barbara is having a baby. I knew that had something to do with what he meant. But I also thought he was noticing what I kept noticing—the way people were near us and yet far away when we worked on their houses. That first, breast-feeding lady—she'd pass by, usually carrying the baby, wearing a bathrobe. She didn't look sloppy but mysterious, like a woman in a misty dress in a damp meadow on the box of some feminine-hygiene product.

IT interests me to work in someone's house, but it's easier when the house is empty. Sometimes John gets contracts to renovate houses that are being made into residences for retarded people or some other group. There are special requirements—extra fire exits, wheelchair accessibility. Just now John and I are renovating a house where psychiatric patients will live. We have to put in two complete bathrooms. Today John said we could quit early because he had to go to the dentist. An old filling had been bothering him. "What do you think?" he's been asking me. "Will he drill again?"

We quit installing plumbing at three. John has a plumber he uses for tapping into the sewer pipe, but we install sinks and toilets and bathtubs ourselves, and of course we also do wiring and put in heating ducts and so forth. John had taught me to set the wax ring that seals a toilet in place, and this was the first one I did entirely on my own. I'd ruined a few wax rings before.

John had to send some contracts to the state, and before he left he asked me to take them to the Federal Express office when I was done cleaning up. I have my own key to the house—we each have one, so it doesn't matter who arrives first in the morning. After locking up, I decided to stop at home on my way downtown and pick up the Norton anthology so I could have some Ezra Pound copied. There's a copy place right near the Fed Ex office on Whitney Avenue.

I come and go, and my mother tries not to be nosy. She was home when I came in. "Did you ever send anything Federal Express?" I asked her.

"Of course. My boss sends things all the time."

"How do you do it?"

"They don't take cash," she said. "You fill out a form."

"Did you ever read Ezra Pound?" I said. I didn't know which poem to copy.

"I don't think so."

When I walked into the Fed Ex office the woman behind the counter saw me looking around and pointed to a table at the side, and when I looked over there, the first thing I saw was a big, worn-out, turquoise-colored bag—one of those Danish schoolbags—and my stomach lurched, because it looked so familiar and yet as if it came from far away. Ms. Feldman had carried that bag, or carried one just like it, always with straps and buckles dangling, and there she was, in a green raincoat, her blond hair spread out over her shoulders. When I approached, she put the bag on the floor without turning around. She was filling out a form.

"Ms. Feldman," I said. That is, we weren't on a first-name basis yet—except that she'd always called me Tom. She was going to be Ida within seconds, but right then she was still Ms. Feldman.

"What are you doing here, Tom?" she said. I explained about the contracts and the state and carpentry, and we stood there, leaning on the table and talking. She seemed the same age as she did when I was in high school and she was a new teacher. She reached her arm in front of my face to point out where I should write what on the form. The sleeve of her sweater, sticking out from her coat, was a soft, dark pink, and I wanted to touch it. As slowly as possible, I copied the address John had given me. Several things had happened, and I was trying to round them up, like marbles rolling in different directions. "Ida," I said, to get used to calling her Ida, for a start.

"What?" She'd gone back to her own form.

"What are you sending?"

She put the turquoise bag on the table between us again, and looked at me with a light in her eyes, and then she took a long, thin loaf of French bread out of her bag. "I'm sending it to my mother," she said.

"Why?"

"I baked it." The loaf didn't fit in the envelope, and she broke off six inches. Then it fit at a slant.

"Won't it be stale?" I said.

"Of course." She laughed. She put the rest of the bread on the table and we sealed our envelopes. "Or maybe not," she said then.

The next thing to get used to was that I wanted her just as much as I did when I was seventeen. Wanting Ida unfolded again like an umbrella that had been in my closet all that time—a big golf umbrella in six colors. And what seemed even better, as we carried our envelopes to the unsmiling woman who'd been there all along but didn't seem to be listening, was that we were now the same age. When we met I was seventeen and I suppose she was twenty-three—a woman and a boy. But six years don't count, once you're grown up.

Ida broke the remaining bread in half as we left the Fed Ex office, and we ate it. Even without butter, it was excellent. She paused as we reached the sidewalk, wiping her mouth, then brushing crumbs off her front. Instead of saying goodbye, I asked her about Ezra Pound, and we thumbed through the anthology. "The first Canto, I guess," she said. "What made you think of Pound?"

"I don't know," I said. "We were nailing up molding and he just came to mind."

"*Pounding* those nails, I suppose," she said.

I groaned and said, "Come with me to get it copied"—and though it seems simple, this was the hardest thing, but once it was said, everything was different. I was trying out the new way we were going to be—we two grownups.

"Does it bother you that he was anti-Semitic?" I asked, as we went into the copy shop. Feldman was a Jewish name, I realized.

"You think I *like* it that he was anti-Semitic?"

"But you read him anyway?"

"Now and then." And she read aloud—dramatically, while people turned and watched—from the Canto:

> And then went down to the ship,
> Set keel to breakers, forth on the
> godly sea, and
> We set up mast and sail on that
> swart ship,
> Bore sheep aboard her, and our
> bodies also
> Heavy with weeping, and winds
> from sternward
> Bore us out onward with bellying
> canvas,
> Circe's this craft, the trim-coifed
> goddess.

At "trim-coifed goddess," she stuck out one hip and touched her hair,

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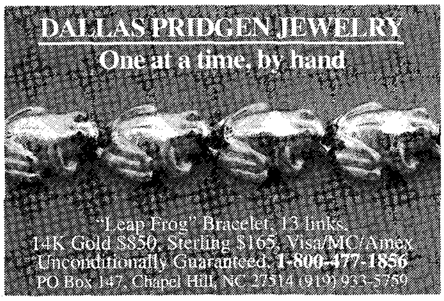

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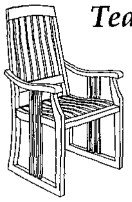

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7" TALL

shaking it back with a funny gesture. "It's so good to see you!" she said.

But I don't think she knew yet. She didn't know we were going to be lovers. "Want to see the toilet I just installed?" I said.

"Bread, plumbing," she said. "Very able people."

"I'd like to talk," I said, and shrugged.

"I have to be someplace," she said, "but not for two hours."

With a copy of Pound's first Canto in my pocket, we walked to my car. She had come on foot. I'd parked legally, I hadn't been towed or ticketed, the contracts were on their way to Hartford, and Ida Feldman was sitting in my car while I wanted her just as much as I did at seventeen, when I pressed my face into the pillow at night, as if she were waiting under it and I could gnaw through and reach her.

The house we're working on is a big, frame one-family with a porch, owned by a nonprofit group. I guess the state chipped in, or maybe they just sent the rules over: a rail near the tub and a ramp in case there's a wheelchair user, sprinklers in the kitchen, and so forth. I felt proud of the house, fitting my key in the lock while Ida peered in the porch window.

I turned on the lights. The electricity is on, so we can use power tools and see what we're doing, but there's no heat yet. We kept our coats on. I took her through the first floor, letting myself touch her elbow to guide her. She did a little dance in the living room to say it was big—you know how people signal that a room is almost a ballroom.

"But I haven't seen your toilet." She loved the bathrooms, she said. She was impressed that John and I could make bathrooms where none had been before. "Are you going to keep doing this kind of work?" she asked.

"Should I?"

"How should I know?"

"You're right," I said. "I guess I thought you'd say I should become an English teacher."

"Is it better to be a teacher or a carpenter?" said Ida. "We need both."

"The people who are going to live here need more than carpentry," I said.

"I don't know," said Ida, patting the basin. "If I were a psychiatric patient, I know my problems wouldn't go away if I had a nicely installed toilet. But it wouldn't hurt!"

I explained how I'd set the toilet in place. "A rather mundane piece of life," she said, "but I never knew before how it was done."

"May I kiss you?" I said.

She nodded slowly, looking surprised but not surprised. My lips had barely touched hers—I had just got the first hint of the feel of her mouth, which is dry and soft—when the doorbell rang, a double chime that seemed to announce the arrival of a whole tea party.

We jumped apart. "I should warn people about kissing me," said Ida. "This invariably happens." She resigned herself. "Nothing is simple," she said as she started down the stairs. We clumped noisily to the front hall.

"I hope we're not interrupting," said the young woman on the porch, and we shook our heads stupidly. "I'm Pamela Shepherd—"

"And we're the flock," said the man behind her. He was a young man with dark hair and a quick, mocking look, and behind him was a short, thin, middle-aged woman. Pamela Shepherd was a social worker, and these were going to be residents of the house.

"We planned just to drive by and look at it," said Pamela, "but we saw the light."

I explained who I was, and in came Pamela and the flock. The man immediately asked when we'd be finished so they could move in. "I've been at the hospital for five years," he said. "Never should have been there in the first place. Long series of mixups. Lost medicine. Doctor died. He was going to spring me."

"I'd hate it if my doctor died," said Ida.

"Woodchucks all over the grounds," said the man. "White squirrels. I bet you never even saw a white squirrel."

The little woman looked up at him through thick glasses. She looked as if she were going to ask a question, but she didn't. Pamela began to ask about the renovations.

When they were in the kitchen, Ida and I stayed behind in the hall to kiss. It was easier this time—it was as if it were our tenth kiss, except that the feel and the taste of her were new. I'd thought about it many times, but I hadn't imagined the slight coolness of her skin or the way her hair would get in my mouth. We heard the flock coming toward us. They were about to leave, and then the doorbell rang again.

It was a woman carrying a bag of groceries. "I saw a light," she said. "I live on the block. I was making sure nobody broke in."

She looked all of us over. I couldn't tell whether she was a nice person who was curious or somebody out to make trouble. Our two future residents happened to be standing on either side of me, and I had a silly impulse to spread my arms wide as if to guard them. The silent lady in the thick glasses, who stood to my left, looked a little like this woman who had just come in. They both had gray coats with gold buttons. "Is everyone from the state hospital?" said the woman. I didn't know whether she was asking if we were all mental patients or whether everyone who was going to live in the house was from the state hospital.

"No," said Pamela. "A mixed group."

"My husband," said the woman. "He keeps talking about who's moving in here. He's been talking to the neighbors. After all, there are old people on the block."

I got upset. It was the only time all day I was really upset.

"Old people?" said the young man. "An old man killed someone for starting a fire—for burning leaves, which you know is against the law. But your husband doesn't burn leaves, does he?"

"Burton," said Pamela firmly. Ida began to laugh, and so did the silent lady, but the woman with the groceries didn't laugh.

"I'd like to grow tulips," said the quiet woman.

"Oh, tulips, well," said the woman with the groceries. She shook her head doubtfully, as if tulips grew only in certain rare conditions that you didn't find much around here. And then she left, and so did Pamela Shepherd and the flock, and Ida and I went back to kissing.

Ida said, "I should have *known*," and we moved awkwardly from room to room while kissing. After a while I stopped and said, "That lady's going to make trouble."

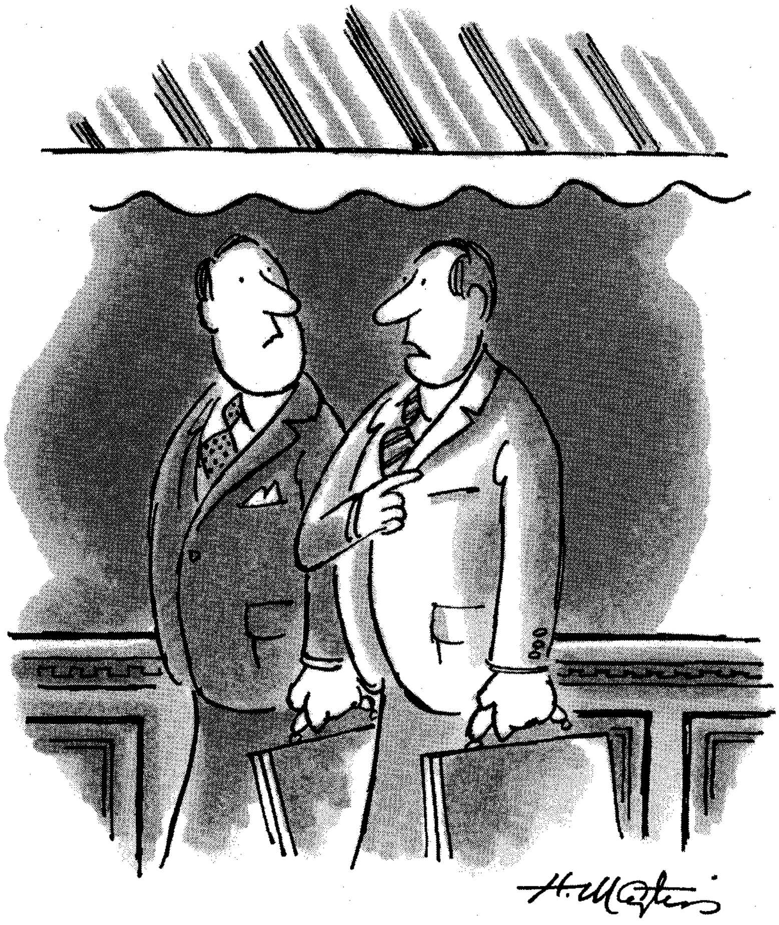
"She might," said Ida.

"What will we do then?"

"We'll decide when the time comes," she said firmly, and I was comforted, or almost comforted. I don't know yet what kind of trouble the lady is going to make, if any. I don't know how her trouble could get into the happiest day, but it did. And still it was the happiest day. We kissed some more. Ida left her bag on the living-room floor and we kissed our way from room to room, looking for a place to lie down—but there were only hardwood floors. Then I heard a key in the lock and then clattering. It was John, who'd gone from the dentist to the lumberyard and come back with a load of lumber. "Get an early start tomorrow," he greeted me when we came to the door. He looked across the living room at the turquoise bag, flopped there with its buckles open, and then he looked at Ida.

"We have a Canto of Pound's for you," said Ida.

I handed it to John and he read it. "Nothing about Jews," he said, "one way or another." He looked at Ida again and then he looked at me, and I could tell that he saw how happy I was, that he saw Ida just the way I did, as if he, too, had loved her for years, as if he'd turned into me for a moment, just to see how it felt. Which seemed remarkable—that someone should care to know. Ida and I didn't say anything. We stood there like fools, our hands at our sides, like people being measured for something. We were looking at John as if he were the future, while he looked at us as if he wondered what we were working up to. We all stood there longer than you'd think, and after a while I began to enumerate tomorrow's tasks in my mind: we're going to build a doorway with the new lumber, and then we'll put in a kitchen floor. Soon, when Ida and I have been lovers for a week or two, and the shape of her naked breasts is already familiar and dear to me, heat will come through the clanking metal ducts John and I have been fastening into place day after day. And if we put in the plumbing right—if nothing goes wrong—then water will flow through pipes. ♦



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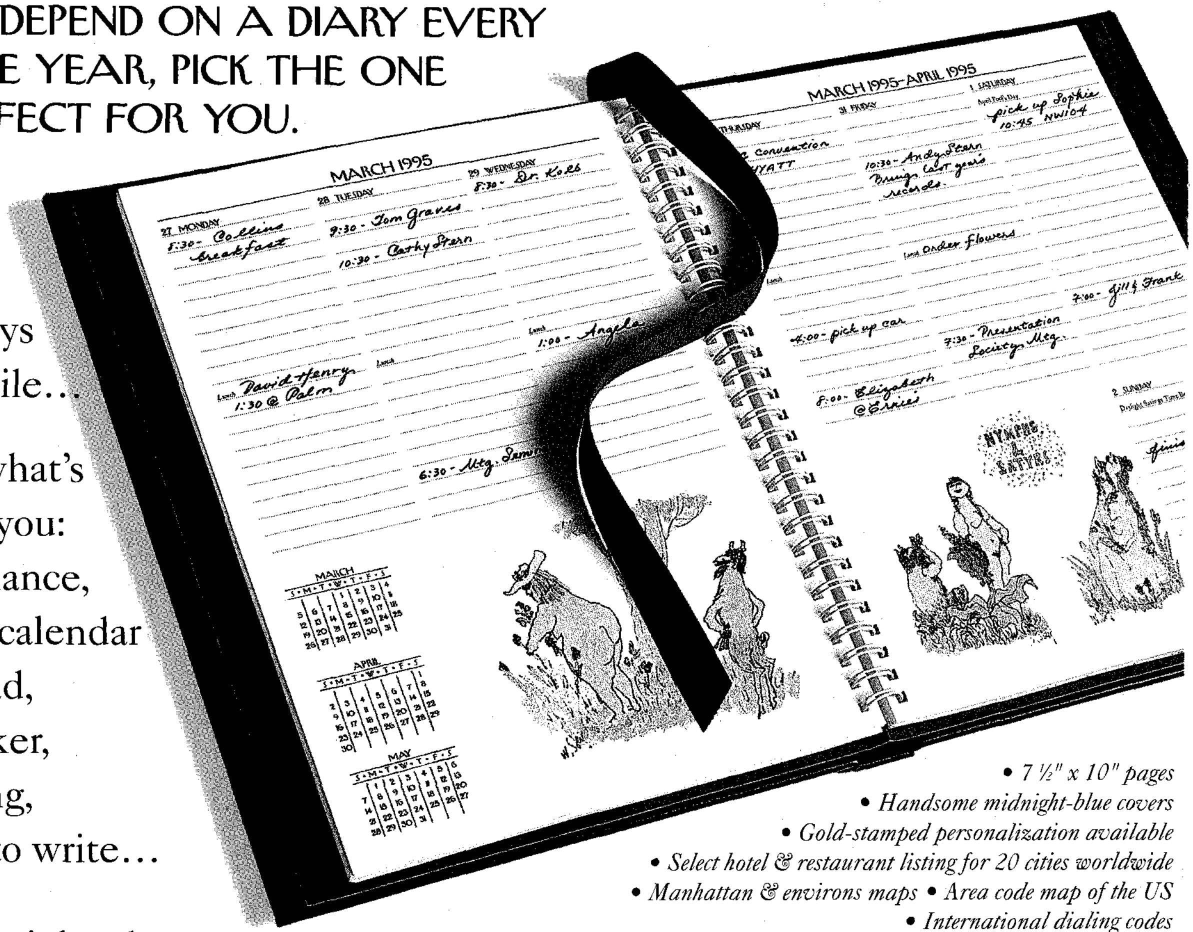
MARCH 1995
27 MONDAY
8:30 - Collins breakfast
28 TUESDAY
9:30 - Tom Graves
10:30 - Cathy Stern
29 WEDNESDAY
8:30 - Dr. Kols
Lunch David Henry 1:30 @ Palm
1:00 - Angela
6:30 - Mtg. Sam
MARCH 1995-APRIL 1995
31 FRIDAY
1 SATURDAY
pick up Sophie 10:45 NW104
10:30 - Andy Stern
Order flowers
4:00 - pick up car
7:30 - Presentation Society Mtg.
7:00 - Jill & Frank
8:00 - Elizabeth @ Elaine's
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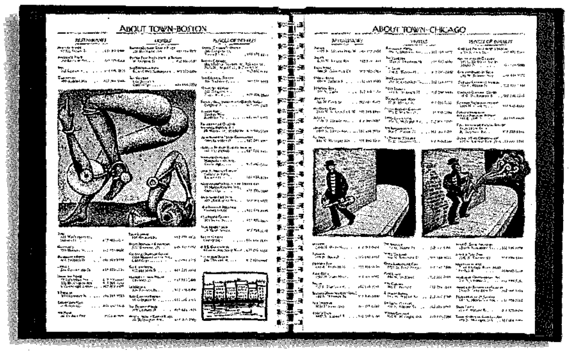
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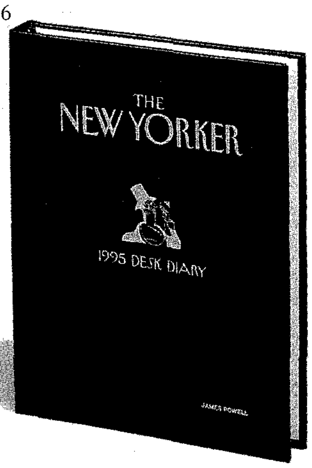
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JAMES POWELL

THE CRITICS

BOOKS

THE INDIVIDUALIST

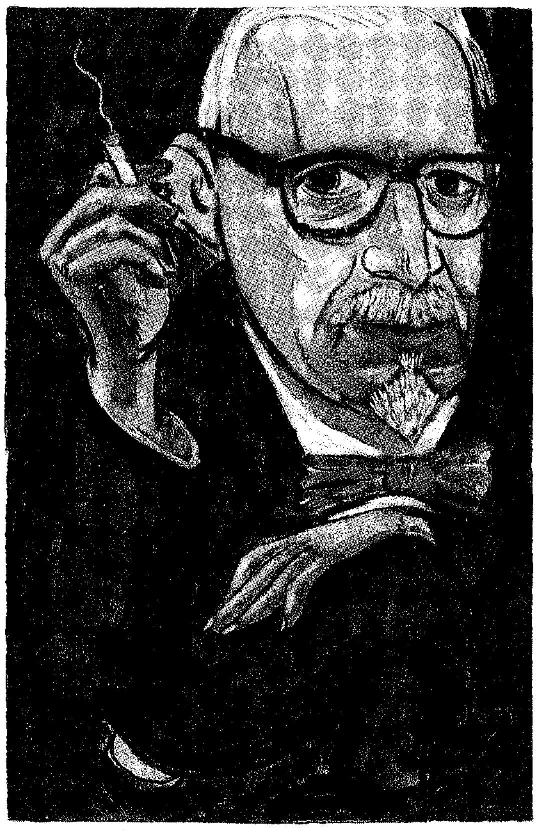
BY MICHAEL SRAGOW

A Rebel in Defense of Tradition: The Life and *Politics* of Dwight Macdonald
by Michael Wreszin
(Basic; $30)

UNLIKE Dwight Macdonald, Michael Wreszin isn't a journalist or a critic or a parodist or a prose stylist. He was not, apparently, a "Macdonaldite" when Macdonald's journal *Politics* (1944-49) became a testament to anarcho-pacifism, nor was he a devotee of Macdonald's cultural criticism when he was the watchdog of Western civilization for this magazine (in the fifties and early sixties) and the film critic for *Esquire* (1960-1966). Wreszin is a professor of history at Queens College and at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. The book grew out of his research on the "non-Communist Left," those "radicals who opposed Stalinist Communism but who were also critics of the liberal cold warriors and of much of American foreign policy, as well as capitalist consumer culture." The Dwight Macdonald Papers at Yale—"a motherlode of material," containing correspondence with everyone from Trotsky to T. S. Eliot, from Mary McCarthy to Abbie Hoffman—persuaded him to focus specifically on this restless intellectual without portfolio. Wreszin admits, "Even when I strongly disagreed with him, I identified with his rebellious, anti-authoritarian, anti-administrative mentality, and his persona."

Wreszin's fondness for his subject (he refers to him as "Dwight") is what gives this sturdy biography its strong emotional current. His identification with Macdonald becomes complete and moving near the end, when he fixes Macdonald in the mind as a teacher, like himself.

For roughly five decades, Macdonald was the one-man band of American haute journalism: a political, cultural, literary, and movie critic, as well as a goading presence in lecture halls and at demonstrations, and a virtuoso of letters to the editor. So his fans felt cheated by his dwindling output in the decade and a half before his death, late in 1982. Macdonald hated his writer's block and bemoaned the meagreness of his output. He was being honest when, in a quest for an academic post, he wrote a series of letters that began, "I'm tired of writing and might enjoy teaching." By all accounts, he was an inspirational teacher; Wreszin says, "His students were astonished and grateful for the time and interest he put into their work." To Wreszin, this biographical sidelight illuminates the critic's main career:



Dwight Macdonald: For roughly five decades, he was a one-man band of American haute journalism.

AHMET GÖRGÜN

> When it came to the exchange of ideas, he had a marvelous ability to be inclusive, to draw people out, and to make them feel that what they were saying was important. It was a gift. He had achieved it in his writing, a tone of voice that broke through all formality and got to the crux of the issues.

As a writer, Macdonald always had been a teacher—a capering, nonconformist one. Unlike Robin Williams in "Dead Poets Society," he used verbal zaniness both to open minds and to teach books, and was able to parody Ernest Hemingway, Norman Mailer, and James Joyce, not just impersonate John Wayne doing Shakespeare. Raffish and cosmopolitan, he substituted literary pranks for pedantry, self-exposure for authoritarianism, and revelation for the laying down of answers. He was the enemy of jargon

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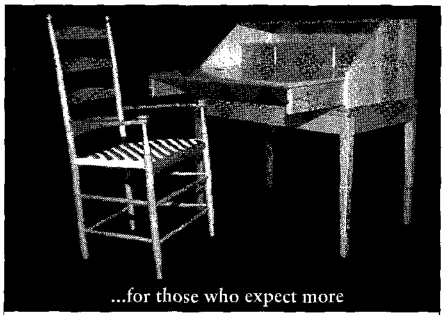

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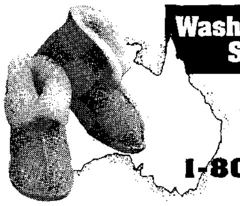

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and cant, the celebrant of clarity and pith.

Macdonald's frisky yet committed manner combined classicism and conversationalism. He was the ideal spokesman for the traditional canon, because he applied it cunningly to contemporary issues and artifacts—introducing an examination of the Warren Commission Report by invoking the Iliad, or seeing how James Gould Cozzens' "By Love Possessed" stacked up against Leo Tolstoy's "The Death of Ivan Ilyich." He became the man whom editors relied on to deliver the Big Picture, and his critiques of the Encyclopædia Britannica's Great Books series ("The Book-of-the-Millennium Club"), the Revised Standard Version of the Bible ("Updating the Bible"), and Webster's Third New International Dictionary ("The String Untuned") had unparalleled sweep and confidence. Macdonald insinuated witty recollections and firsthand wisdom into these epic overviews. And *that* gave them the impact of epiphany. What's most piquant about his 1952 lambasting of the Great Books is his asterisked description of the Harvard Classics:

> There is an amateurish, crotchety, comfortable atmosphere about them that is more inviting than the ponderous professionalism of the Great Books. . . . When I was a boy, I enjoyed browsing in the family set of the Classics, but browsing in the Great Books would be like browsing in Macy's book department.

The comparison is more humorous for readers who know that he spent nearly six months in the executive training squad of R. H. Macy & Company.

Ten years later, in his diatribe against Webster's Third, he noted a lapse in "objectivity" while winking at his own political past:

> The tendentious treatment of *McCarthyism* contrasts with the objectivity of the definition of *Stalinism*, which some of us consider an even more reprehensible *ism:* "The political, economic and social principles and policies associated with Stalin; *esp:* the theory and practice of communism developed by Stalin from Marxism-Leninism." The first part seems to me inadequate and the second absurd, since Stalin never had a theory in his life.

Macdonald had long ago passed from Trotskyism through pacifism to anarchism—and had become, in Norman Mailer's words, "one of the oldest anti-Communists in America."

Although Macdonald usually did his homework, he never paraded his research and always took a personal point of view—qualities that made his most dense and sombre social criticism vivid and accessible. His 1963 *New Yorker* essay-review of Michael Harrington's "The Other America" ("Our Invisible Poor") helped catalyze the War on Poverty. (J.F.K. read Macdonald's piece, not Harrington's book.) What made it persuasive wasn't simply its marshalling of evidence and its tone of anger held in check but the kind of deceptively casual observation that Macdonald had mastered early. "There is a monotony about the injustices suffered by the poor that perhaps accounts for the lack of interest the rest of society shows in them," he wrote. "Everything seems to go wrong with them. They never win. It's just boring."

Macdonald has stolen the show in the articles and books that have recalled or caricatured him, from memoirs and biographies of *Partisan Review* editors (Macdonald was one from 1937 to 1943) to Mary McCarthy's "The Oasis" and Saul Bellow's "Humboldt's Gift." A libertarian editor named Macdougal Macdermott sparks the opening pages of "The Oasis" by first demanding that the utopian enclave he shares prohibit the membership of "a Yahoo," and then reversing his position; midway through the book McCarthy declares, "The crowning and unexpected grace of his character [was] an *élan vital*, seemingly springing from nowhere, which buoyed him up and translated him into a realm of pure essences, beyond the pedantry of judgment. The targets of his satire could never truly dislike Macdermott, for they found themselves endowed by it with a larger and more fabulous life."

Mailer depicted Macdonald even more generously in a posthumous tribute. He borrowed from his vibrant sketch of the critic in "The Armies of the Night," and, like Wreszin, invoked the image of the teacher:

> He was one of the best teachers of writing in the world. . . . If one had learned a little about writing already, well, then there was all the world of self-expression to pick up in the felicities of his style. Dwight had something fabulous to teach. It was to look to the feel of the phenomenon. . . . If something feels bad to you, it is bad. . . . Dwight attacked every subject upon which

he wrote with all the angelic candor of his strengths and weaknesses and so introduced a new note into our intellectual letters, for he never let us forget that when an idea attacks another idea we are near to the totalitarian, but when a man explores a subject with all his wit and all his flaws, then indeed we know more, yes, so much more.

WRESZIN unveils the life story that shaped Macdonald's bold, self-revelatory stands. It's an open-minded, becomingly modest biography—though not the kind Macdonald would have written himself. When Macdonald was editing James Atlas's biography of Delmore Schwartz, he advised, "Omission, generalization, intensification: that's your clue!" Wreszin tends to include, particularize, and sprawl. He lacks Macdonald's skill at locating defining details. For example, you have to study the footnotes to find young Dwight's campaign in the *Yale Daily News* against compulsory beanies: "Pleading for support, he wrote in his column: 'Are there no Reds, no anarchists, no radicals, no thrower of bombs among us?' " You do learn that Macdonald's father was chief legal counsel for the Triangle Film Company and once lectured on film history at Yale, but Wreszin slights the critic's on-and-off affair with movies; again in a footnote, he confesses, "Demands of focus and my own lack of expertise have caused me . . . to offer only a cursory treatment of his film criticism." It wouldn't have been hard to put Macdonald's reviewing in perspective. The blurbs on my battered 1971 paperback of "Dwight Macdonald on Movies" are reasonably accurate; the *Times Book Review* quote reads, "If Mr. Macdonald is murderously funny about the third-rate, only to be unfair to the second-rate and the avant-garde, he's both forthright and prophetic on the subject of the first-rate."

Wreszin avoids many of the pitfalls Macdonald found in scholarly biographies, such as "using passive, circumlocutory syntax as if you were looking over your shoulder at a PhD committee and were afraid they'd catch you with your feelings and ideas too nakedly exposed." He writes clearly and elucidates the vagaries of Macdonald's professional and personal relationships; he doesn't shy from passing judgment on his hero on the rare occasions when Macdonald seems to act from impure motives (as in his devastating pan of his friend C. Wright

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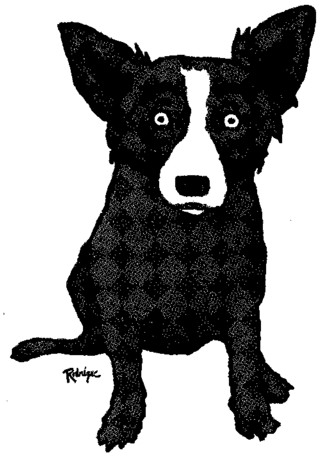

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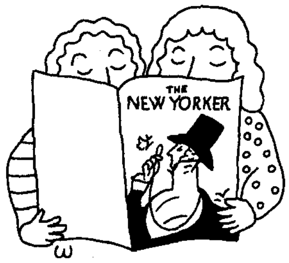

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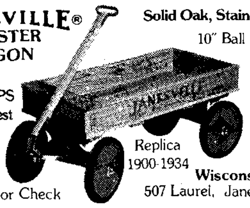

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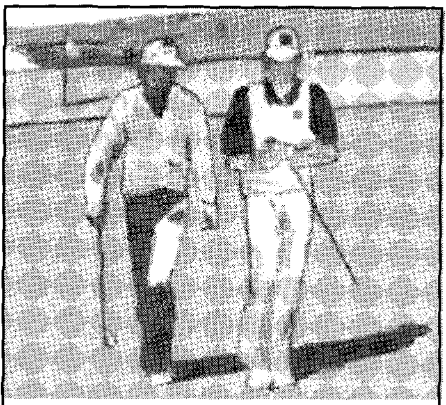

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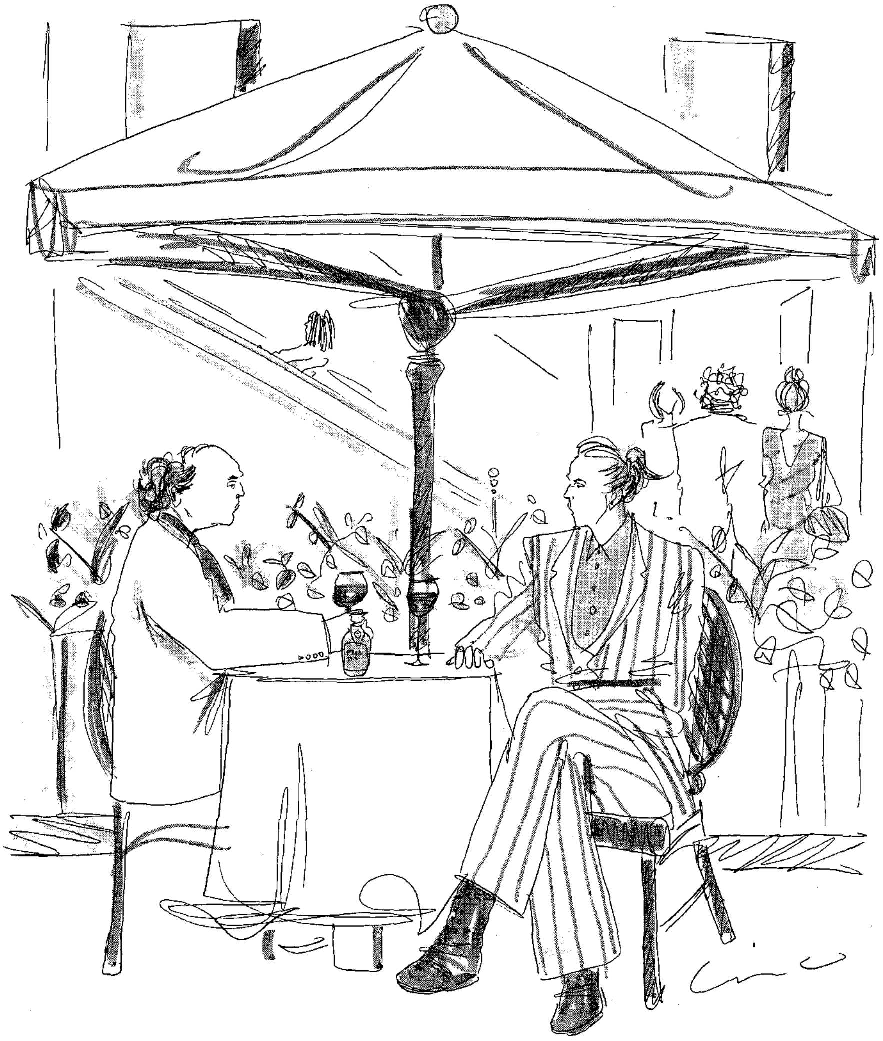

"They say Jupiter is made up mostly of gas, but I imagine you already knew that."

• •

Mills's "White Collar"). This tome occasionally falters as a piece of criticism or art, but it succeeds—admirably—at the task of explicating Macdonald's complicated public and private life.

Born in Manhattan in 1906 to a well-off mother and a Yale-educated, though less well-off, father, the youthful Macdonald resolved to be a literary man. At Exeter, he formed a group called the Hedonist Club and published poetry, criticism, and fiction; one of his short stories impressed James Agee, who followed in his prep-school footsteps and became first his pen pal, then his pal. The genteel mediocrity of Yale inflamed Macdonald's native genius for rebellion but panicked his mother (his beloved father died during Dwight's college years) and forced him to question his future. He fantasized about starting a Brook Farm-like collective, then entered that executive training program at Macy's, hoping (as he explained in the 1957 "Politics Past") to fund his aesthetic and intellectual pursuits with a career in advertising. Unfortunately, he was no whiz at copywriting, and Wreszin quotes a deliciously inapt specimen: "If an interesting room means as much to you as an interesting book, then Macy's home furnishings department is the place for you."

While drinking and brooding about life, art, and sex, he took a lucrative writing job at Henry Luce's *Fortune*, where he learned a key organizational principle—"Put everything about the same subject in the same place." He also co-founded a small magazine called *The Miscellany*, where he wrote about film, theatre, and poetry. He seesawed between awe and contempt for American captains of industry and foreign dictators; toiling for *Fortune*, he began to see through them. In 1934, he married Nancy Rodman, a Phi Beta Kappa Vassar grad and the sister of Selden Rodman, who edited the leftish journal *Common Sense*. Wreszin gives equal credit to Macdonald's "inquiring mind" and "his wife Nancy's humanist spirit" for provoking the critic to unload "the prejudices and provincialism of his class—anti-Semitism, racial stereotyping, sexist patronizing"—and also "a foot-locker full of dandyish pretensions."

The biographer goes on to show that Macdonald was always tumultuously in process, as a writer and as a man. He never stopped analyzing how much of the past he had put behind him. From his *Fortune* days on, he went through periods of extraordinary (at times alarmingly miscellaneous) activity, secured new political and literary identities, then regrouped—without shedding aspects of his previous personae. The quarry work Wreszin has done in Macdonald's journals, notes, and drafts—the stuff that Macdonald, attempting to write his memoirs, referred to as "Dwight's Last Tapes"—pays off. It enables him to trace the continuity in Macdonald's revulsion for and fascination with mass culture and society, his attraction to and rejection of encompassing theories, his attempts to reconcile artistic élitism with social egalitarianism, his peculiar and sometimes volatile blend of puritanism and hedonism. Despite his aversion to mere fact-mongering, Macdonald increasingly practiced an enlightened empiricism. In his introduction to "Dwight Macdonald on Movies" he wrote, "I can't explain the *why* except in terms of the specific work under consideration, on which I'm copious enough. The general theory, the larger view, the gestalt—these have always eluded me." As this book proves, he found his own pleasures and turmoils the richest source of empirical study. His underlying consistency was a devotion to the rights, the responsibilities, and the aesthetic responses of the individual beset by modern mass society. His self-analysis prompted an unusual note of tragicomic urgency in his writing. And his empirical bent made him especially sensitive as a critic to the achievements of his friends Agee and Mailer when they transformed journalism into literature.

Macdonald's existential flailing, his clashes with *Fortune* editors, and his marriage to Nancy led him to flirt briefly with the Communist Party in the mid-thirties; after he left *Fortune*, in 1936, over the magazine's disembowelment of a series he did on U.S. Steel, he joined the editorial board of *Partisan Review* and helped reshape it into a publication famed for iconoclastic politics and modernist criticism. Two of Macdonald's enduring characteristics were his love of heated argument and his ability to dish it out and take it—even when his hero, Trotsky, called one of his articles "stupid." Macdonald also drew the line when it came to defending his core commitments. He left *Partisan Review* when it softened its radical perspective and started his own monthly (later quarterly), *Politics*, to voice his opposition to the Second World War. Macdonald's stance made ideological if not historical sense; he hadn't lost his radical belief that a working-class third force against capitalist or totalitarian governments of any type would foment international revolution. When no evidence of that third force arose, he segued into pacifism. He later treated his antiwar extremism as a mistake. ("Pacifism does not have a reasonable chance of being effective against a totalitarian enemy.") But it compelled him to sharpen his edge at a time when other radicals were sheathing theirs. His outcries against the dehumanizing power of totalitarianism, the hypocrisies in Allied conduct during the war, and issues as specific as the United States' inadequate response to the plight of Jewish refugees now seem prescient. In 1946, he summed up his break with Progressive materialist analysis in an essay that took its title, "The Root Is Man," from Marx: "Now the root for mankind is man himself." Two decades later, prominent New Lefties such as Todd Gitlin and Staughton Lynd hailed Macdonald's work, just as Macdonald took kindly to some offshoots of sixties radicalism. In one of the few Macdonald interviews that Wreszin doesn't cite, which appeared in a paperback original called "The Con III Controversy: The Critics Look at the Greening of America" (1971), Macdonald conceded that he had mixed-to-positive feelings

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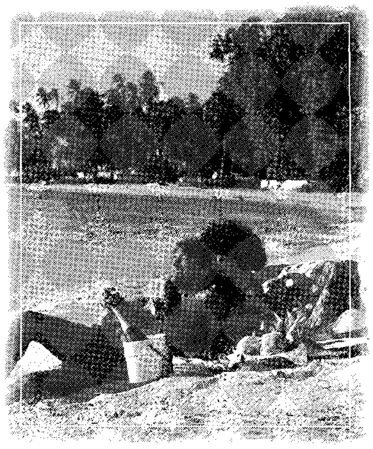

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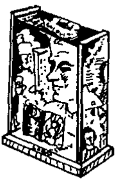

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about Charles Reich's transcendental manifesto. He mused that Reich's concept that a change of consciousness could change society "gives me something I've been after all my life—a rationale for escapism." He continued, "To cop out is to be committed and to be co-opted is to be a deadly poison to the system. On to the barricades if that's your bag, but they also serve who only sit and wait. This is a lovely idea."

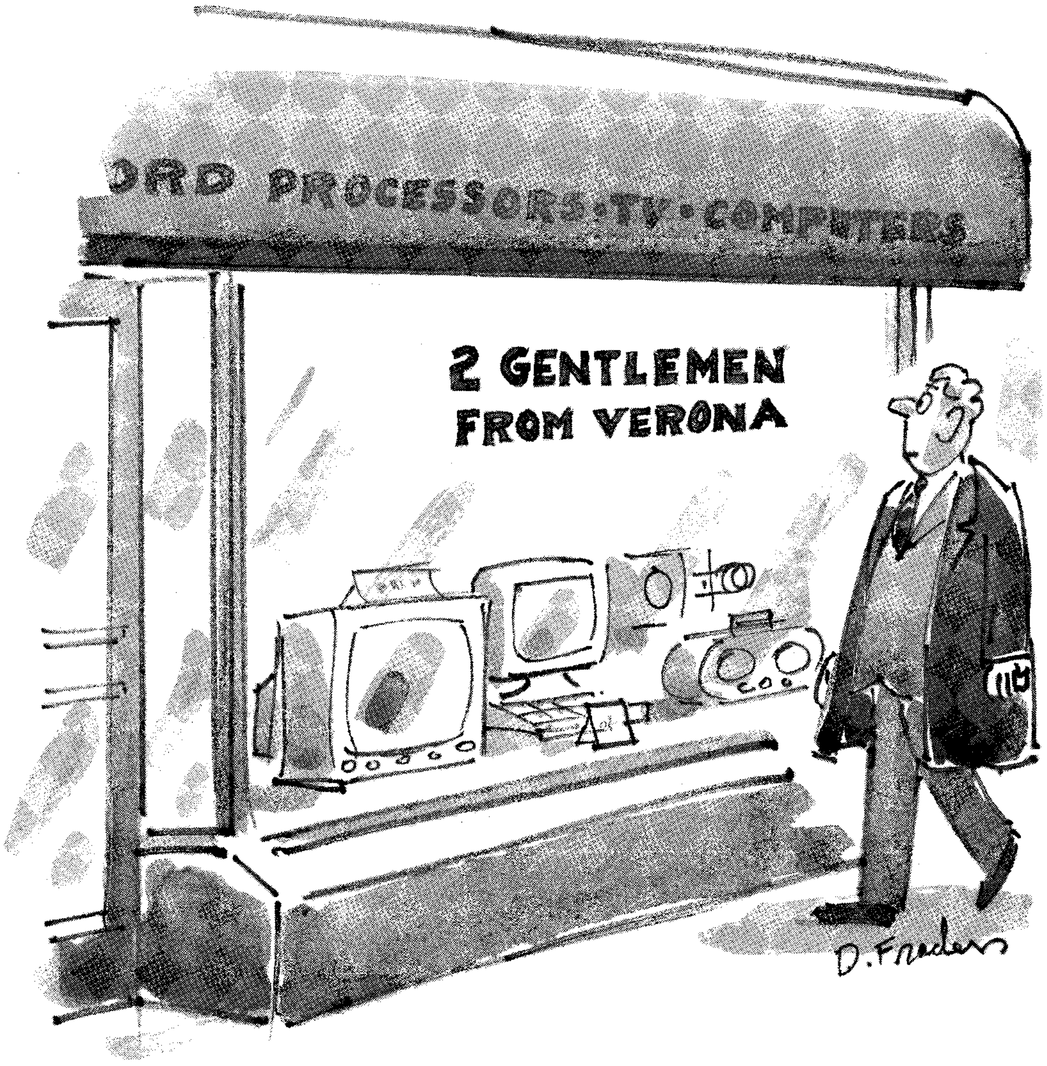
Macdonald's support for certain New Left and counterculture actions and activities, such as the Columbia student strike of 1968, caused his peers to accuse him of camp-following and radical chic. But coming near the end of Wreszin's account it seems consistent with the political and the bohemian facets of Macdonald's personality and thought—particularly his hunger for a liberated *community*. (Some of the sprightliest passages here are about Macdonald's nudist cocktail parties on Cape Cod, where the political writer Freda Utley was seen clad "only in a small bra to hold her hearing aid"; some of the most troubling ones are about the brutally aboveboard extramarital forays that preceded Macdonald's divorce from Nancy and his marriage to Gloria Lanier.) The naysayers hadn't been paying full attention to him. It was true that in the postwar era Macdonald had taken (for him) unusually pragmatic political positions, such as pledging allegiance to the West in the hope of preserving some kind of humane, individual-based society ("I choose the West because I see the present conflict [the Cold War] not as another struggle between basically similar imperialisms as was World War I but as a fight to the death between radically different cultures") and supporting the United Nations–United States police action against North Korea ("Appeasement didn't work with the Nazis and it won't work with the Communists"). But he remained an individualistic *critic*, pillorying the Truman Doctrine and McCarthyism.

Wreszin is insightful about the connection between Macdonald's political and cultural criticism:

> Dwight had found a way to transform his fear of Stalinism into a fear of an encroaching cultural totalitarianism, which, like Stalinism, threatened an entire way of life. In effect, he saw his work as a moral obligation. He was taking a stand.

When Macdonald entered his predominantly cultural phase, he advocated the creation of a self-conscious avant-garde reminiscent of "the old avant-garde of 1870-1930, from Rimbaud to Picasso"—"an elite community, a rather snobbish one, but anyone could join who cared enough about such odd things." His goal was to protect authentic art from the corruption of the market system, which for the mob produced a "Masscult" of formulaic and homogenized kitsch, and for upwardly mobile consumers a "Midcult" of kitsch laden with the mere trappings of art. But in spite of, or perhaps because of, his mastery of polemic he also knew the limits of polemic. In the middle of his stint as *Esquire's* movie critic, he acknowledged that "Masscult & Midcult" had become a "parlor game": "It seemed a suggestive little formula at the time, but what a mess when oversystematic people use it to classify individual works!"

Of course, as a regular movie columnist, Macdonald took a beating from highbrow friends and rivals who thought that the post was beneath him. In the early sixties, his old *Partisan Review* colleague William Phillips wrote Mary McCarthy that it was the perfect time for Macdonald, because he "thinks everything is wonderful as long as he can write articles saying it stinks." Actually, Macdonald's gleeful critical arguments, no matter how negatively inclined, kept him more vital than his *P.R.* contemporaries. Even those who disagreed with his opinions found it fascinating to see a man whose love for "cinema" stemmed from silent masters like Eisenstein and Keaton rubbing up against movies forty years later. His review of



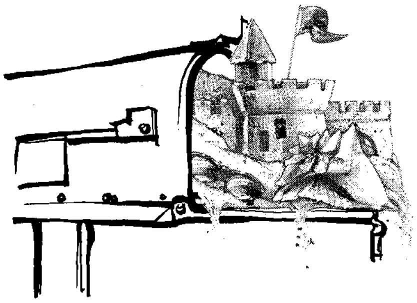
Fellini's "8½" is invigorating no matter what you think of "8½": it displays more sympathy for how a creative mind works, and for what standards it should be held to, than any auteurist tract. Macdonald was looser in his categorizing than his ideological pronouncements would suggest. At the time of the fourth revival of "Gone with the Wind," he was able to call it a "masterpiece of kitsch"—a phrase that he might earlier have considered an oxymoron. He mellowed toward some of his bêtes noires, the Beats, with an affectionate review of the Robert Frank–Alfred Leslie–Jack Kerouac collaboration "Pull My Daisy." And his lampoons of Hollywood Biblical epics were as uproarious as Mark Twain's sledgehammering of James Fenimore Cooper's literary offenses. In his review of "The Greatest Story Ever Told," Macdonald puts all the organizational skill he practiced at *Fortune*, and all the skill at definitions he honed on obscure Marxist texts, in the service of a side-splitting putdown, peaking with his admission that after two hours he decided, "The Crucifixion could only be an anticlimax. So I left." Macdonald didn't waste his immense powers on this material, any more than Pope wasted his on the laggard poets he attacked in "The Dunciad." Macdonald transcends the topic with satiric artistry; he creates high comedy.

Although Macdonald always relied on close readings of political statements as well as of literature, in the fifties he began to insist on a coherent verbal style as the basis of all useful intellectual discourse. In his final collection, "Discriminations," there's a barbed and eloquent brief entitled "A Note on Style"—a 1960 letter to the editors of *Dissent*, responding to Irving Howe's contention that if Macdonald were reviewing the Sermon on the Mount he would observe that while "Mr. Christ makes some telling points" they are obscured by bad syntax and "a woolly pretentious style." Macdonald wrote:

> This is singularly inept buffoonery, since the Sermon on the Mount is notably clear and simple, at least as rendered in the King James Version, to which I have paid public homage on several occasions. But there is this much point to it, which some of your contributors might ponder: that *were* the Sermon woolly and pretentious in style, that would indeed be my reaction, and I should be right, since in that case the Sermon would not be the great moral message it is but a botch, and not only in style. Great ideas can only be expressed in a great style. There is no such thing as a clear message delivered in a confused style; the message is the style and the style is the message. Selah!

The paramount virtue of Wreszin's biography is that it reveals the elements of Macdonald's style, from prep-school dandyism to dialectics and on to something deeper. Few critics have welded such disparate talents—a gift for parody and apposite quotation (which he showcased both in his own essays and in the editing of his classic anthology "Parodies"), a knack for knitting together diverse information, and an ability to come up with rubrics to crystallize old quarrels and resolve new ones. For Macdonald, this gap-bridging in prose may have been a necessity. In life, he lacked a middle ground. In his youth, he thought his love affairs were doomed because he wanted to jump immediately from an intellectual connection to a sexual one. Later, his sons complained of his emotional distance, even though he was a boon companion. But in his written voice he was both outsized and approachable, playful and serious, spontaneous and disciplined. No matter how natural he was as a teacher, it was as a writer that he defined himself. And, having made the act of writing crucial to his sense of self, he poured everything he had into it.

The adjective most often used to describe Macdonald's criticism is "lively." That's accurate only if all the word's meanings are taken into account, from "active, intense" and "brilliant, fresh" to the simple "living." (In the eighties, Da Capo reissued four of his books in trade paperback: "On Movies," "Parodies: An Anthology from Chaucer to Beerbohm—and After," "Discriminations: Essays & Afterthoughts," and "Against the American Grain: Essays on the Effects of Mass Culture." They're still in print.) Wreszin notes in his preface that the Polish poet Czeslaw Milosz saw Macdonald as part of an American tradition—that of "the completely free man, capable of making decisions at all times and about all things strictly according to his personal moral judgment." Wreszin doesn't ignore Macdonald's decline, fuelled by alcohol, frustration, and isolation. But his biography leaves you with the sweet aftertaste of freedom. ♦



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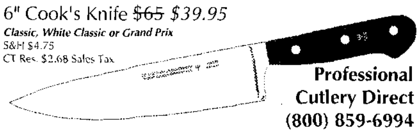

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BY ANTHONY LANE

"CAFÉ AU LAIT" is the first feature by a twenty-five-year-old Frenchman named Mathieu Kassovitz. Boy, is it a first feature. Kassovitz wrote it, directed it, and gave himself a plum role. There wasn't much more he could do. I even craned around in my seat to check that he wasn't up in the projection room, tenderly changing the reels. The movie is a mess, but, as with any good début, the messiness is born of enthusiasm; Kassovitz has gathered up everything that interests him—love, loud music, his own Jewish heritage—and stuffed it into the picture. He goes for grabby jump cuts or for takes so long and meandering that you fear for the health of the cameraman; he doesn't want to leave the world alone for a moment, in case it tosses up something new.

DONALD BRAKEN

Kassovitz plays Félix, a bicycle messenger who careers around Paris but doesn't quite know how to dismount from his bike. He comes to a halt and just *sits* there, stiff with panic, waiting for the tremors of imbalance to begin, and finally keels sidewise with a clang. I have a weakness for running gags, and this one, a running gag about staying still, seems peculiarly apt for a movie about restless souls trying hard to settle down. If Félix is bad at his job, he's even worse at the rest of his life; he deals drugs and gets into fights, he's a racist with a pregnant girlfriend from Martinique, and—here's the stinger—he may not even be the father. His rival turns out to be Jamal (Hubert Kounde), who is moneyed, Muslim, and black.

From here, it's not hard to see where the comedy will spring from, or where it's going to end up. But Kassovitz pushes the predictable just far enough to give it an extra, sneaky dose of pleasure. He supplies his character with the standard lovable grandparents, but the family-dinner scenes are still a joy, with everyone continuing to mumble in a series of competing, querulous monologues even when—or precisely when—there's nothing left to say. The only thing that shuts the family up is the arrival of Jamal as a dinner guest. Eventually, Grandma pipes up. "So, you're black, then?" she inquires politely. Jamal is more than adequate to the situation, being the most sophisticated figure in the story—certainly the only one with maid service in his apartment. Kassovitz duly serves up the neat ironies (black guy worries whether it's O.K. to leave his swanky car in a poor white neighborhood), but there are also more delicate jokes, about Jamal's efforts to get real. Quitting school and going to work in a fast-food joint, he leaves his credit cards on the hall table. But the camera stays with them, knowing their owner all too well by now, and watches calmly as he turns back to pocket the American Express card—you know, just in case. Even more hopeless is his occasional, unpracticed flourishing of the black-unity ticket as he tries to convince Lola (Julie Mauduech) that the two of them belong together. "Our grandparents were slaves," he says. "Your grandparents were diplomats," she replies.

Another actress might have chosen to snap that line at Jamal, scoring a proud point off him. But Mauduech does just the opposite, cooing it in perfect calm. I'm not sure how good a performer she is, or will ever be, but that doesn't really matter; the camera is in her thrall. She

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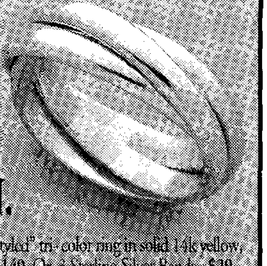

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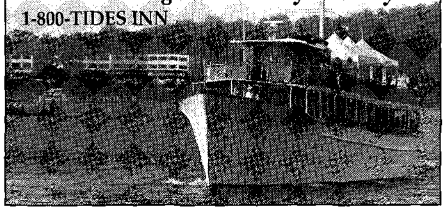

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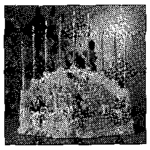

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faces it with absolute composure, the kind you could mistake for dumbness if you didn't know better: she's the Kim Novak of Martinique. Mauduech can pull off the Novak trick of seeming at once reasonable and lost in reverie—half distracted, but never more than half. She also possesses a smile that appears to end somewhere around the back of her head; it opens wide not only when we least expect it but when *she* least expects it—on waking from a dream, for instance. The screenplay gives her way too little to do, but I can imagine Kassovitz starting to view the rushes, seeing that he had struck gold, and deciding to make amends. The images that ensue have no logical place here, but so what; as Félix sits on the edge of a swimming pool, a sleek Lola stands in the water up to her shoulders, then drops suddenly below the surface and rises again, like a seal. After the movie's hectic beginnings, she visibly cools it down.

It's impossible, of course, to make a film about a ménage à trois without turning your viewers' minds back to "Jules et Jim." Truffaut's investigation of the subject was, at a conservative estimate, about four hundred times better than Kassovitz's (one flowed, the other hurries), and Mauduech, in all her loveliness, is no match for Jeanne Moreau, but Truffaut would have swooned at her, nonetheless, and admired her ability to lead lovers on and then leave them gasping in her wake. In both movies, the men bicker over their shared goddess like boys—servant boys in this case, with Félix and Jamal agreeing to split Lola's household chores between them. They are tamed, unmanned—locked for a while into bourgeois habits that they thought themselves strong enough to evade. In other words, you catch the sweet smell of revenge comedy, as male youth is landed with the duties that it usually inflicts on others. Such well-intentioned liberal satire is always easy to watch, but it seldom strikes very deep. The rolling threesome of "Jules and Jim," on the other hand, bubbled with a genuine spirit of revolution; there were no responsibilities in the first place, and therefore none to be slipped onto another's shoulders. The lyrical effects of love spread out of control.

"Café au Lait" is not a love story at all, although that's what it would like to be. It's the modern, unsaturated substitute for a love story: the togetherness riff—amenable rather than ardent, ruffled by penchants rather than racked by obsession. Kassovitz starts his movie with a view of the planet from space, and gradually homes in on Paris, where black and white, under his benevolent aegis, will be put through the mill and ultimately joined as one: the whole thing could have been sponsored by Benetton. I had a pretty good time at "Café au Lait," unlike the woman sitting next to me, who announced in firm tones as the end credits rolled, "I want my money back," but Kassovitz's pushy racial optimism did give me pause. In Paris recently, the Interior Ministry, concerned by fundamentalist violence in Algeria and driven by fears that it might touch off terrorist activity in France, ordered the police to stop and question likely suspects. We all know what that means. Love may indeed make the world go round, but make sure you have your papers ready.

The scummiest patch of "Café au Lait" comes in the first twenty minutes, as Kassovitz gluts our ears with a selection of fine French profanities. The subtitles—which, as usual these days, are sometimes awkward and sometimes miss the point altogether—get carried away, distilling filth out of what is essentially slang. This overreaching continues into the more placid areas of the film, where a perfectly respectable French sentence meaning "How could she prefer him to me?" is rendered as "How the fuck could she prefer him to me?"—a Woody Allen chord transposed into Spike Lee. Kassovitz would no doubt find this flattering; his entire movie, bicycles and all, is shot through with allusions to "She's Gotta Have It," and if French can be made to clip along like ghetto talk, so much the better. What makes him a man of his times is his curious belief that a foul tongue is in itself a guarantee of realism—that to chop both language and behavior down to their lowest common denominators is a proof of your sincerity as an artist.

This is a naïve and barren path to take; it can only be pursued in stubborn ignorance of the low style, which has almost as long and distinguished a record in movies as it does in literature. The survival of that style has been threat-

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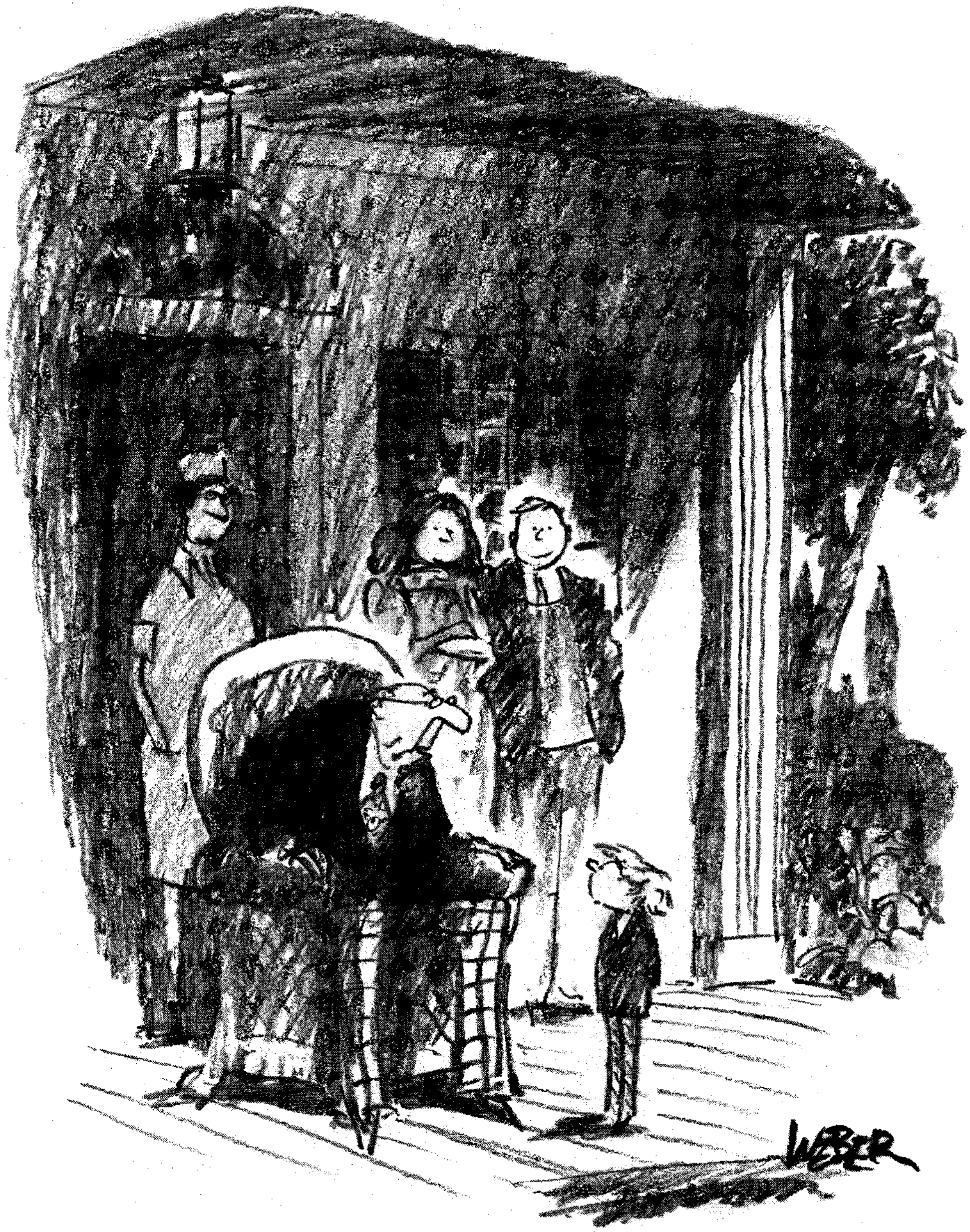
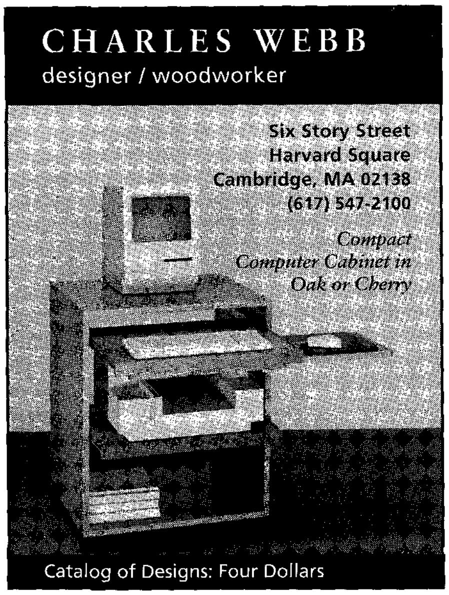
ened, not insured, by the relaxing of censorship; life was easier for Ben Hecht than it is for David Mamet, say, who has no walls of official disapproval against which to bang his prose—he can write what he likes. Command of rhythm becomes everything; it is the refinement of the writer's ear, not the rudeness of his material, that makes the dirt sing. Hence, the big problems that confront a film like "Fresh," another first feature that strives to immerse itself in the life of the street. The writer and director, Boaz Yakin, wants to project onto the screen all the rage that you hear in rap music, but he hasn't found the beat. Where Kassovitz concedes that there is only limited mileage in his loudmouths, and is wise enough to steer his picture into relaxation, Yakin is determined never to let up. His story, set in the New York drug trade, has a bunch of young characters swapping insults at high volume. There is one astonishing sequence at a basketball game, when the camera is left alone to administer a terrible shock. Is it any coincidence that the finest moment in the movie should also be the quietest?

Fresh, played by Sean Nelson, is a young kid who delivers smack for a local baron (Giancarlo Esposito). I have to say that Nelson is not quite up to the mark; he looks baffled and blank, whereas the plot demands that he exercise ineffable cunning in luring assorted heavies into a trap. The kids in the picture generally look a bit lost; I felt sorry for them as they stood there and reeled off the unceasing curses of Yakin's script. The new black cinema, which accelerated into controversy three years ago with "Straight out of Brooklyn" and "Boyz N the Hood," is running into the same kind of obstacles that met the grimy British cinema of the sixties; the intensity and vehemence are far from exhausted, but they have become stuck with a manner instead of rising into a style. "Boyz N the Hood" managed to be inflammatory without ever catching fire as a piece of moviemaking; like "Fresh," it remains more provocative than interesting. The new black cinema rings with argument and confrontation, yet it somehow fails to argue with itself; it is striking a single note with increasing force, not unlike the mainly white mainstream films that it was braced against at the outset.

The irony is that, if black directors seem stuck in a groove, black actors represent the most enlivening and dependable body of talent in Hollywood today. Who doesn't want to go and see a movie starring Morgan Freeman or Denzel Washington, Samuel L. Jackson or Laurence Fishburne? All these men are turning in regular work that is richer and more troubling than anything that Boaz Yakin or John Singleton, or even Spike Lee, could devise for them. Jackson has a part in "Fresh" that is almost an exact copy of the one taken by Fishburne in "Searching for Bobby Fischer" last year: the chess player in the park, down on his luck but up for a game—the father figure who can teach the kid how to make the right moves. As written, both roles are slumped over the edge of sentimentality, with all sorts of cheesy moral metaphors built into the chess talk, but the performers stand them upright and pull them back. People like Jackson could put black cinema where it belongs, on the leading edge of American moviemaking; they could use some good scripts, for a start. ♦



"Remember, Timmy. Anything worth doing is worth having somebody do well."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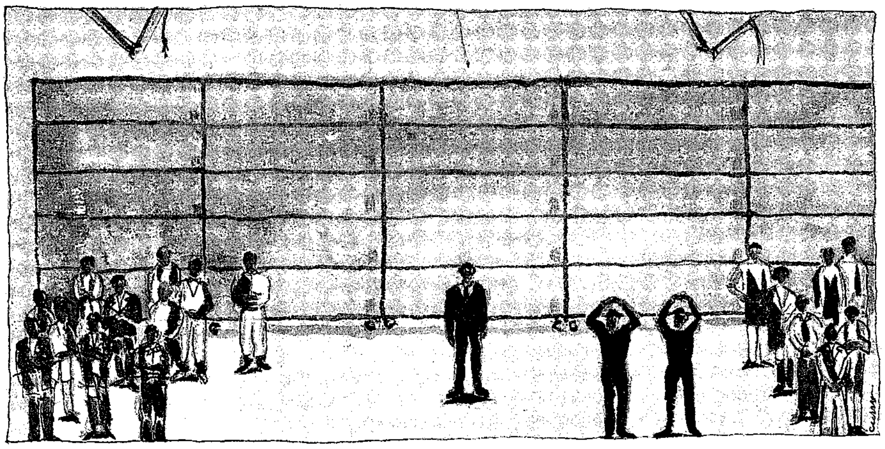
MUSICAL EVENTS

STRAVINSKY AT SALZBURG

BY PAUL GRIFFITHS



Peter Sellars' "Oedipus Rex," part of Gerard Mortier's revolution.

STRAVINSKY, ever alert to status symbols, was quick to recognize the importance of the Salzburg Festival. In 1922, when his "Histoire du Soldat" suite was dropped for lack of rehearsal time, he expressed his annoyance in a letter to Ernest Ansermet: "Here I am at the head of modern music, so it is said, and as I willingly believe. Here I am, forty years old, and ignored in the grand prizes of the 'Great International Congress' of Salzburg." Seventy-two years later, he has received his due. This summer, his works were played by many of the luminaries who make Salzburg the classiest rendezvous in the musical calendar: Georg Solti, Pierre Boulez, Maurizio Pollini, Claudio Abbado, Riccardo Muti, Christoph von Dohnányi, Anne-Sophie Mutter. "Histoire du Soldat"—not just the suite but the whole thing—was done in a tent in a courtyard of the university. And Stravinsky's two biggest compositions—"The Rake's Progress" and "Oedipus Rex"—were both offered in imposing new productions.

"The Rake" was roughly treated in the pit and was bullied onstage by Jörg Immendorff's designs, in which a droopy blue airplane was the main feature; the singing of Sylvia McNair as Anne was the one saving grace. The "Oedipus" production, directed by Peter Sellars, had at least the virtue of dealing head on with the work, and with its central problems of heterogeneity, compactness, and repeated interruption by spoken links. All these things have a purpose, in making us feel the story as distant. Being disconnected in itself, the work is unconnected to us; there's no consistent world in which we can place, and live with, these fragments modelled on Bach, Verdi, Russian liturgy, and twenties café music. The intrusion of an actor-narrator, urbanely superior to the specimens of ancient drama he exhibits (this was the role that Jean Cocteau, the librettist, wrote for himself), further emphasizes our separation from the myth, and the work's brevity makes it seem only an incomplete artifact or a defective memory. Crucial elements of the plot are missing: most crucial of all, the singing characters make no reference to the oracle prophesying that Oedipus would kill his father and marry his mother. Also, because the piece is over in an hour or so, it is denied the dignity of standing alone. (Until recently, Bartók's "Bluebeard's Castle" was its common partner; another possibility would be to have one of Stravinsky's most neglected works, "Mavra," follow it as satyr play.)

Mr. Sellars, typically, subverted the composer's formalization and estrangement. The plague afflicting Thebes was a plague we were in: the main efforts of the set designers, the architectural partnership COOP HIMMELB(L)AU, had gone into re-creating the Grosses Festspiel-

CHRIS CURRY

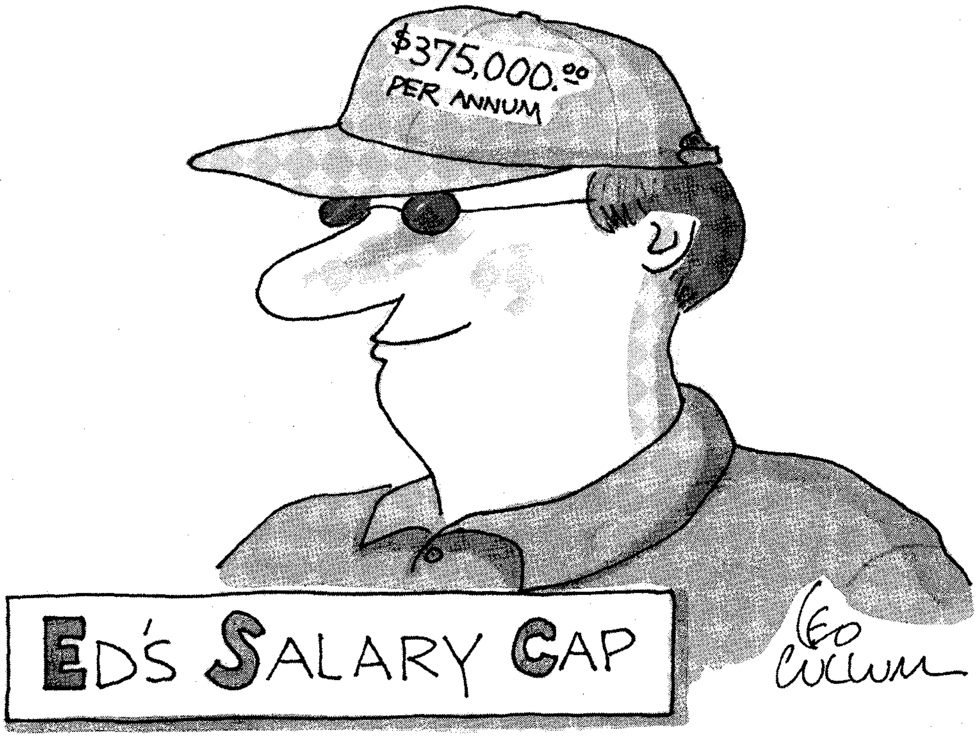
haus as a bomb site, shored up by timbers and clamped by a massive crane, while onstage fluorescent tubes dangled and an immense gray backcloth gave the impression of having been hastily hoisted to conceal some wreckage lying behind. The narrator—"presenting the story with a detached voice," as the score has it—was replaced by an actress, Edith Clever, seizing us from inside the panic, as Oedipus' daughter Antigone: Mr. Sellars had rewritten the text for her, using the poetry and intensity of Sophocles to mitigate the mundanity and ennui of Cocteau. Also, the action was made to fill the evening by the inclusion of the "Symphony of Psalms" as an epilogue, in which the story was carried forward to show Oedipus coming to Colonus with Antigone and his other daughter, Ismene; his disappearance from the earth; and Ismene's dance of joy and prayer.

All this was ingenious; much of it was apt. The struts were there for an enthralling reconstruction of the work. But it didn't happen. Uncharged, except by Ms. Clever, the bleak stage went dead. The marching chorus, in suits of cream, red, and brown, lacked energy. The strip lights were hideous things to look at for an hour and a half, and the set's other principal feature, a great rolling window whose panels could be switched from opaque to transparent, was just a cumbersome toy. As with Messiaen's "Saint François" at Salzburg two years ago (which had the same lighting designer, James F. Ingalls), Mr. Sellars hints at a kind of technological theatre that isn't quite working for him yet. His hand signals—here drilled into everyone except Antigone—stopped working for him some time ago; they also went against the current of the production by presenting the myth as a ritual, if one enacted by Ruritanian postmen who are beginning to be retrained as deaf-mute therapists. The assumption of Oedipus into Heaven, also ritualized, had zero magic—he just crawled into a square of light tubes, which his daughters moved away—and Ismene's dance was an undisciplined waft. Nothing, therefore, made the "Symphony of Psalms" integral to the production; nothing resulted from the powerful and eminently Stravinskian idea of an opera lifting off from language into movement.

Kent Nagano's conducting of the score was of a piece with Mr. Sellars' conception in rejecting spruceness to let the rhythm hang loose a little and allow the oddity of the scoring to show. Part of the effect may have been due simply to the width of the pit. Brass and timpani, at opposite sides, were in different acoustic spaces and called to one another in bellicose antiphony. And the prominence of the piano was heightened, whether it was gathering up other instruments in nets of notes or sounding almost alone, as at the start of Creon's aria. Piano sound—with its intimations of the practice room and the composer's studio, and therefore of preparation made part of the performance, the past linked into the present—is fundamental to both the symphony and the opera, and was one of the musical features that made their fusion more than just a bright idea. So much the more pity the production couldn't spring the idea into life.

"Boris Godunov," also in the Grosses Festspielhaus, provided a fascinating lesson in Stravinsky's likeness to Moussorgsky, however much he preferred to claim Tchaikovsky as his musical godfather. "Boris" and "Oedipus" are both dominated by men's voices; both go along unworried that harmonies are unsupported or scoring is spatchcock (we were hearing Moussorgsky's own second version, not the success that Rimsky-Korsakov made out of the composer's failure); both use the tenor voice as an instrument of self-deception; both pursue vocal portraiture to the point where characters seem to be coming from different musical worlds. Moussorgsky's Rangoni, so mellifluous, has stepped out of Verdi, just like Stravinsky's Jocasta, with her furious flights and sultry wobbles in the manner of Amneris; and Marina Mniszek, the Polish princess Moussorgsky brought into his Muscovy epic, can't open her mouth without spouting mazurkas. Marjana Lipovšek was both Jocasta and Marina, her stateliness better suited to the former role, in which Mr. Sellars, in an all too rare moment of direct gesture, had her sing the central part of her aria as a lullaby to the son-spouse cradled in her arms. Others who made a mark in "Oedipus Rex" included Matti Salminen as Tiresias, impressively forceful and monitory, and Franz-Josef Kapellmann as Creon, who alone made Mr. Sellars' hand signals incisively, as if he meant them, and as if they meant something.

In the "Boris," there was a wonderfully rambunctious performance from Aage Haugland as the miscreant monk Varlaam, and Philip Langridge was excellent as the conniving Shuisky: utterly precise, utterly untrustworthy. Equally strong was the performance of the Slovak Philharmonic Chorus, running across the huge stage as if



revolution had broken out (the background for much of the action was a picture gallery of the rogues and heroes who have governed Russia, from Ivan III to Boris Yeltsin), or locked—all two hundred singers—into a huge prison wall of voices. "Boris," like "Oedipus," is a choral opera, an opera in which people who are acted upon count for more than people who act. The Czar, the Pretender, and the Princess can seem, as they did in this production, like storybook figures, marvellous and unreal. The chorus is solid, and the Holy Fool is solid, his role enlarged here by the restoration of the abandoned St. Basil's Square scene, and by his almost constant presence as observer.

As in the Karajan days, Salzburg has close links with the big record companies, and this "Boris" coincided with the release of a Sony Classical recording (S3K 58977) featuring most of the same people. Like the stage production, the recording includes everything Mussorgsky wrote, and persuades one—if persuasion is still needed—that his grays are preferable to Rimsky's golds. They sounded better, too, and exact, in the theatre, where, at the performance I attended, Anne Manson was substituting for Claudio Abbado on the rostrum, so becoming the first woman to conduct at the Salzburg Festival.

Of this year's Mozart productions, "Don Giovanni," about which I mean to write later, was directed by Patrice Chéreau, and "La Clemenza di Tito" by Ursel and Karl-Ernst Herrmann—a beautiful, just staging, full of telling detail that was usually quiet (Publio leaning beside the throne, a child left asleep at an upstairs window after the crowd scene in the first act) but could also be loud (Vitellia daubing herself with war paint while "Parto, parto" was being brilliantly sung by Ann Murray). The Herrmanns' second production, of an array of Mozart arias and ensembles under the title "Ombra Felice," was sadly disappointing in offering only a sequence of lovers' tiffs and complaints under the aegis of a female elf. There are other ways of doing these things.

Gerard Mortier, supervising his third Salzburg Festival, has by now created a small constellation of choice imaginative radicals, which includes the Herrmanns and Mr. Sellars among stage directors and, first among composers, Pierre Boulez. As in 1992, Mr. Boulez brought to Salzburg the Ensemble InterContemporain with electronics technicians to present a big piece of his own: then it was "Répons"; this time, it was the newer and more impressive ". . . explosante-fixe . . .," which the same musicians performed in Carnegie Hall last fall. Where in "Répons" the computer equipment serves largely to decorate what is effectively a concerto for tuned percussion accompanied by winds and strings, in the new piece electronic revoicing is part of the conception. Throughout the first two "chapters," the three flutes, which lead the music, are amplified, modified, and more or less melded by the technology: everything is heard through or against a solid block of flute sound—a block always in internal motion but always the same, and always anonymous, since it's impossible to discern which player is responsible for what. This gives the work a presiding unease; a pall hangs over the attempts of the acoustic instruments—including a trio of violins in the second chapter—to move through the music with independence and definition. There's also an unusual steadiness in the musical development. The piece may go racing off for pages, but it keeps returning to an ambulatory tempo, and to harmonies of a sophisticated sensuousness reminiscent of Berg or Ravel. The final chapter, which is a reworking of Mr. Boulez's "Mémoriale," suddenly simplifies everything: the form is a succession of verses and refrains (though the E-flat that ends each refrain is deliciously teased out in different ways electronically), and one of the flutes comes forward as decisive soloist. We may feel we're being handed the solution, but the wrong solution, or the solution to a different puzzle. The deep, dark enigmas locked into the music remain.

A few days later, Mr. Boulez conducted the Vienna Philharmonic in a program he might have given in Los Angeles, London, or Amsterdam thirty years ago: Stravinsky's "Symphonies of Wind Instruments," some Debussy, Ravel's "Shéhérazade," and the Opus 6 sets of both Webern and Berg—a beginner's guide to twentieth-century music, and all as fresh here as it ever was. Salzburg has long been home to expense and tradition (following in the line, one might think, more of Mozart's archbishops than of Mozart himself). Perhaps, under Mr. Mortier's guidance, it will also be the last place on earth where modernism lives on. ♦

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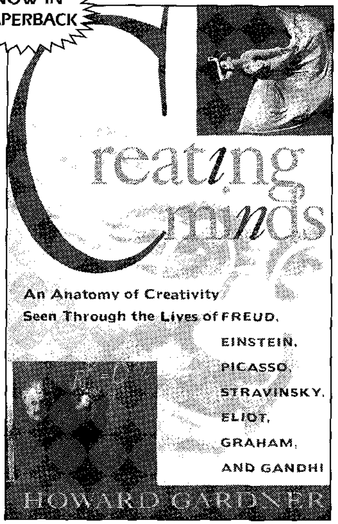
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BOOKS BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Playing for the Ashes
by Elizabeth George
(Bantam; $21.95)

IN 1882, the English were defeated in cricket on their own soil by the Australians. After the match, the *Sporting Times* reported that cricket had died and been cremated and its ashes taken to Australia. A century later, in the seventh of George's superb mysteries, the victim is Kenneth Fleming, a sharp, cricket-mad boy from the Isle of Dogs whom a Kensington Lady Bountiful named Miriam Whitelaw has molded, by sheer force of will, into Britain's best batsman. Fleming has been found dead of smoke inhalation in a Kent cottage owned by Mrs. Whitelaw, and the case falls to Detective Inspector Thomas Lynley and Detective Sergeant Barbara Havers. Off duty, Havers, having finally put her mother into a nursing home, is gruffly attempting to make a home of her own, and this theme of home—who lives where and with whom, home as a measure of security, the sense of the home team—runs through the narrative. Olivia Whitelaw, Miriam's daughter, is a Cambridge student turned tart who is now chastely cohabiting on a houseboat with a St. Francis who takes in maltreated dogs; Lynley himself is still trying to add Lady Helen Clyde to his domestic establishment; and Fleming's estranged wife, Jean, a character as strongly drawn as any in recent fiction, holds down a scatty home fort amid a brushfire of media speculation while trying to protect her children. The scheme of the novel is both gritty and satisfying, but one reads on for the book's deeper revelations as well.

GENERAL

9 Highland Road
by Michael Winerip
(Pantheon; $25)

BETWEEN 1990 and 1992, Michael Winerip, a reporter for the *Times*, paid daily visits to a group home for the mentally ill at 9 Highland Road in the prosperous Long Island suburb of Glen Cove. Long Island has long been famous for the bitterness of its NIMBY (Not in My Back Yard) protests, and the opening of this group home, which is funded by the state but run by a nonprofit organization, set off a degree of political and neighborhood anguish that in retrospect looks delusional, utterly paranoid, and selfish. The twelve people who came to inhabit 9 Highland Road, most of them suffering from schizophrenia, turned out to be model neighbors, not drugged psychotics, and many of the more vehement opponents of the group home soon found themselves reconsidering their opposition. As for the residents themselves, 9 Highland Road offered them their first decent abode since their illnesses were diagnosed, and one that was far cheaper than any of the alternatives. For some, the resident staff provided the first accurate diagnoses—most notably in the cases of two patients suffering from multiple-personality disorders that were the result of early sexual trauma. An extraordinary young woman named Julie, whose father began abusing her when she was five, captures the hypocrisy that seems to typify the way Americans have traditionally dealt with the mentally ill. "People picket against group homes and I haven't hurt anybody," she says. "There's no one marching around my parents' house picketing what they did." The best disguise for cruelty, you realize as you read this remarkable, persuasive book, is normality.

The Coast of Summer
by Anthony Bailey
(HarperCollins; $23)

THIS account of the summer of 1991 aboard the Lochinvar, a twenty-seven-foot fibreglass sailboat, folds geography, history, oceanography, autobiography, and social observations at ports of call both grungy and glitzy into an enchanting narrative. Bailey, an Englishman who lived in this country as a child during the Second World War, returned here as a young journalist, and from 1961 to 1971 lived in Stonington, Connecticut. He now lives in London, but his boat winters in Connecticut, and almost every summer he and his wife fly over to sail in familiar but ever-changing waters. Over the course of this particular voyage, Bailey recalls thirty previous summers and visits to friends (many of them dating from his earliest days at *The New Yorker*) up and down several coasts. His story is crowded with mini-adventures in fog and shallows, but a hurricane finds the Lochinvar and its crew safely in port. The whole book feels like that—lucky, happy, imbued with the kind of serenity that makes salt water seem a cradle or a rocking chair.

Home Rules

by Denis Wood and Robert J. Beck
(Johns Hopkins; $29.95)

IN the living room of Ingrid and Denis Wood's house, in Raleigh, North Carolina, an unused fireplace holds a thriving potted plant, and a string of camel herder's bells hangs on the front door. For Wood and Beck, specialists in environmental psychology, these objects in their places embody ideas defined by class and culture—the plant as tamed fire, for example, or the nomad's bells as folk art put to work. "Home Rules," then, is an oddly charming and occasionally farfetched study of American domesticity, of one family's values as they are symbolized by its living room. The authors document two hundred and twenty-three rules that govern the room and its contents: don't touch the walls, don't stand on the radiator, put that back when you're done, etc. Every parental imperative imaginable contributes to their argument that a living room constitutes both a field of behavioral values and a way of reminding oneself of those values—a mnemonic. In the end, this argument hits home, despite the ubiquitous parenthetical asides that so often burden academic writing—and, not incidentally, despite the eclecticism of the room's contents. As Wood and Beck poignantly prove, even if they never say so, where we live does become us. ♦

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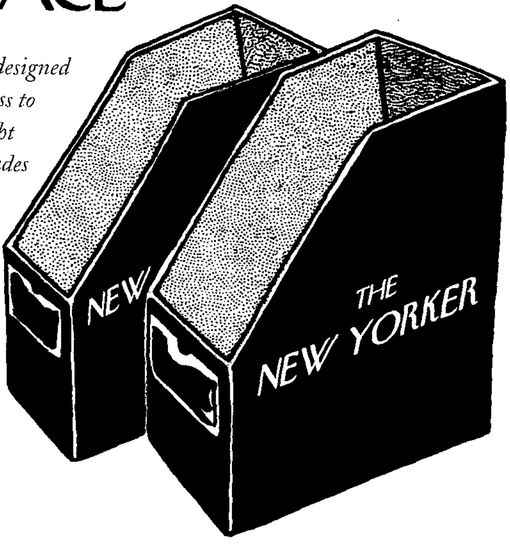

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SHOUTS AND MURMURS

BOOK SMARTS

BY BENJAMIN CHEEVER

JUST the sight of William J. Bennett's "The Book of Virtues" was enough to fill the boys with dismay. "It's like a hundred thousand pages," said Andrew, who's five. He wanted "One Green Frog" for his bedtime story. John, who's eight, had mastered the "God Code" for "Star Wars" on Super Nintendo and was feverish to try it out. You start right off with the light sabre and ninety-nine lives. Clearly, Satan had both my children in his bony grasp.

"This is the No. 11 best-seller in *Publishers Weekly*," I explained sternly. "Thirty-five weeks on the list. Compiled by the former director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy. About virtues. One of which is listening to your father."

I flipped to the first story. "There was once a little word named 'Please,' " I read, "that lived in a small boy's mouth. Pleases live in everybody's mouth, though people often forget they are there." The piece was only two pages long. I made it all the way through to the last line: "And from that time on, little Dick was just as polite as his brother."

Neither of my boys seemed to have been particularly improved by the experience, although both did ask me "please" not to read any more.

"One more lesson," I said. Andrew began to whine.

ME: You aren't being very well behaved.

ANDREW: What's well behaved?

ME: Here, there's a poem on that exact subject:

Frisky as a lambkin,
  Busy as a bee—
That's the kind of little girl
  People like to see.

Modest as a violet,
  As a rosebud sweet—
That's the kind of little girl
  People like to meet.

"What do you think of that?" I asked.

"Dumb," Andrew said.

I had seen William J. Bennett tell an admiring Charlie Rose that most of the excerpts in his book were from works whose copyright had expired. This saved money, he explained, without appreciably lessening the quality of the work, since most contemporary literature lacked the depth and wisdom he sought. What's dumb about that?

John's actual bedtime story that night was from "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn." Huck decides that he must betray Jim. In the event, he can't do it, and lies outrageously to save the runaway slave: "I got aboard the raft, feeling bad and low, because I knowed very well I had done wrong, and I see it warn't no use for me to try to learn to do right; a body that don't get *started* right when he's little, ain't got no show."

Which must be what William Bennett is getting at. But then if Huck had done right he would have had to break faith with his best friend and he would have been supporting slavery. This is exactly the sort of problem that gives the budding moralist a headache. "Huckleberry Finn," by the way, is not excerpted in "The Book of Virtues."

"I want 'One Fish, Two Fish,' " Andrew said when I produced the big book on the following evening.

"We've got to give this a real try," I said. "It cost me twenty-seven-fifty."

There were groans of regret. It's terrible the way parents waste money that could otherwise be spent sensibly on toys.

"Look," I said defensively. "It's educational. It couldn't be more educational. The guy was Secretary of Education."

"I hate it," Andrew said. "I hate it, I hate it, I hate it."

"Fine," I said. "You can go right to bed without any story at all." He got up, in full pout, and vanished.

John and I settled down again with "The Book of Virtues." Then, from the other bedroom, we heard the music of a woman's voice. It was my wife reading to Andrew from Dr. Seuss:

Some are sad.
And some are glad.
And some are very, very bad.
Why are they sad and glad and bad?
I do not know. Go ask your dad.

I rose, closed the door, grimaced, and flipped through the section titled "Responsibility" until I found this:

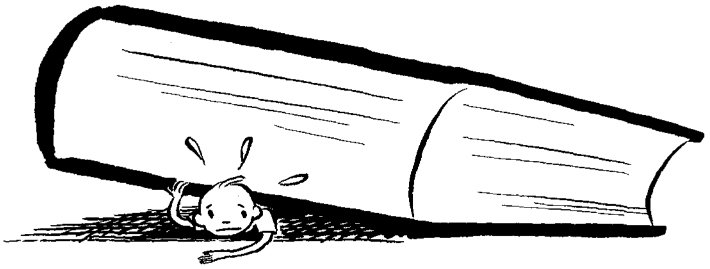
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die . . .

I read, volleying and thundering, right through the final stanza:

When can their glory fade?
Oh, the wild charge they made!
  All the world wonder'd.
Honor the charge they made!
Honor the Light Brigade—
  Noble six hundred!

"So what do you think of that?" I asked.

John nodded, smiling. "Dumb," he said. But he said this gently, even virtuously. So maybe it's working. ◆



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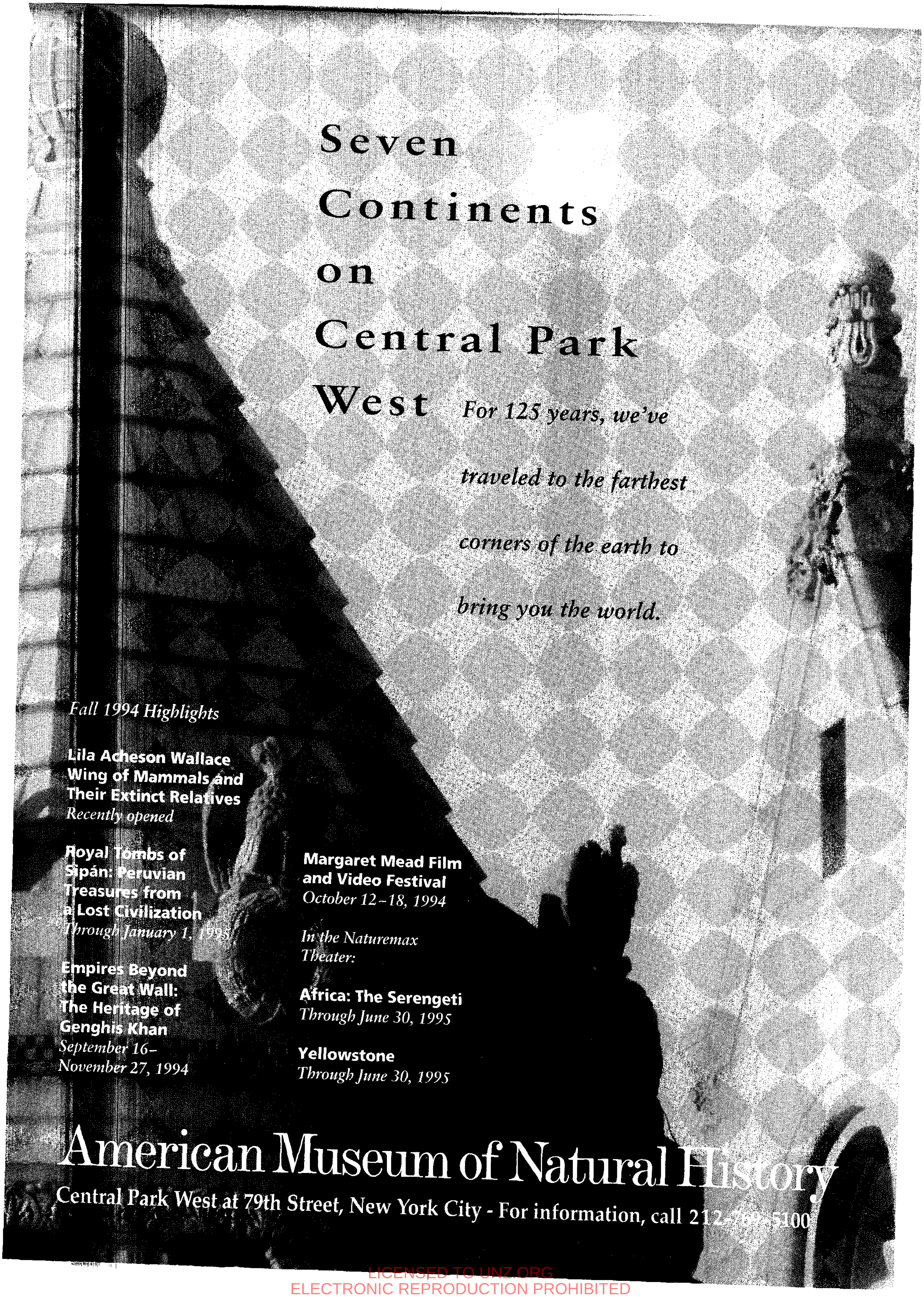

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